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EDITORIAL

HOSTAGE EXCHANGE

Now that Ronald Reagan's handlers have him on a short leash, President Jimmy Carter has switched to portraying him as being "muzzled." Yet in their exchange over Ayatollah Khomeini's "conditions" for the release of the hostages, Reagan, muzzled or not, managed to sound almost statesmanlike compared with the President.

All Reagan said was that he could accept the Khomeini package, although the return of the Shah's assets should be left to the courts, and he cautioned the Iranians not to expect a better deal from him if he were elected. We seriously doubt that the Iranians had any thought of holding up the release of the hostages in hopes of extracting better terms from Reagan, whose frequently stated belief is that the sole cause of the problem is "the decline of American prestige."

Carter, however, at a "town meeting" in Corpus Christi, Texas, accused Reagan of attempting "negotiations with the Iranian authorities through public statements or through the news media." He then proceeded to toss a bone of unwarranted optimism to the voters, saying that Khomeini's statements "might very well lead to resolution of this problem in the future."

Secretary Edmund Muskie, for one, was less sanguine, and the Speaker of Iran's Parliament, which one way or another will play a role in deciding on the disposition of the hostages, said that Iran would still demand an apology for past American interventions. Since Carter has repeatedly vowed never to apologize, he was wise to withdraw the optimistic statement he made in Corpus Christi. As for the original no-apology pledge, the President should have heeded the advice he offered at the town meeting: "I think it would be a serious mistake for me to make public statements about what I accept or do not accept. It's just not a good way to negotiate."

POLISH PROSPECTS
Norman Birnbaum

FEELING THE PINOCHET IN CHILE
Cynthia Brown

GASOHOL: HOME-GROWN FUEL
Fred J. Cook

LAWYERS' MONOPOLY
Philip M. Stern

'LOON LAKE'
George Stade

KAY BOYLE
Earl Rovit

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CARTER'S COURTIER

BRZEZINSKI: LOOKING OUT FOR #1

RICHARD FALK

Like his Germanic predecessor, Henry Kissinger, Zbigniew Brzezinski is a scary character to have so close to the red phone. He dwells in the domain of geopolitical abstraction, believes in the global character of the Soviet challenge (except when he doesn't) and would not flinch at threatening a nuclear holocaust. Also, he seems psychically fragile, flying off unpredictably under pressure.

I recall one revealing incident a year or so before Brzezinski went to Washington. It was during the time he kept his wits sharpened by giving the Kissinger stewardship periodic report cards with grades for its performance in various sectors of foreign policy. During a social interlude at an editorial board meeting of *Foreign Policy*, Warren Manschel, host and publisher, handed Brzezinski a grotesque mask of Kissinger. Brzezinski immediately put it on and started laughing compulsively. He became quite hysterical and subsided only when the mask was removed a long minute or so later. It was one of those surreal happenings that reveal more than a hundred learned discourses. Since then it has been natural to suppose that Brzezinski's public rationality is the *real* mask only thinly covering his unpredictable, chaotic persona. Other profiles and actions have a hundred times confirmed this disquieting impression of Brzezinski the man. Nor is it reassuring to realize that we entrust our destiny as a nation willingly to someone whose rigidly contained inner life, if too untended, might at some point erupt to condition his public role.

A dramatic confirmation of this impression o

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LETTERS.

$400,000 MISTAKE?

Chicago

I read Calvin Trillin's *Variations* column in your magazine [July 19-26] and I immediately asked my editor, Arthur Kretchmer, for a loan. Trillin reported that Kretchmer made $520,734 last year, and I assumed that with numbers like that, Kretchmer could afford to lend me $34 to round off the sum.

Much to my surprise, I learned that Kretchmer did not make anywhere near the money that Trillin (and the Gallagher Report) said he did. In the course of my conversation, I learned the following: that Trillin never called Kretchmer to check on the story; that the Gallagher Report had grossly miscalculated the actual salary; that *New York* magazine, which also printed the story, had been good enough to print Kretchmer's denial as soon as it could ("It is flattering to be known as a half-million-dollar executive," Kretchmer said, "but like most fantasies, it was unfulfilling. My actual salary can be said to be in six figures in the way some agents would describe an $11 sale as having been somewhere between $10 and $1,000").

Maybe next time Trillin could at least check out the story with the subject? It's an old tradition in journalism, and it seems to have some purpose. Checking the facts might have taken away the chance for a witty column—but such thoroughness would also have prevented a $400,000 mistake. *Asa Baber*

CALVIN TRILLIN REPLIES

New York City

I'm happy to set the record straight on this one. Arthur Kretchmer makes $165 a week plus time and a half for overtime. The annual salary of Asa Baber is $520,734. *Calvin Trillin*

TWO OBJECTIONS

New York City

Anent two items in your August 30-September 6 issue:

First, your editorial "Cry Wolf" sounds alarm at Congressional proposals to curb the activities of Louis Wolf and others engaged in the exposure of secret U.S. intelligence agents. I agree that the language you quote from the bills reported to the Senate (and the House) constitutes a threat to freedom and probably is unconstitutional. But I am disturbed that your editorial does not express the slightest repugnance at Wolf's enterprise of fingering Central Intelligence agents while they are at risk on assignments abroad. It is reprehensible for the *Covert Action Information Bulletin* to have pointed out a United States officer whose home was subsequently shot into in Jamaica this summer. What if the officer's child had been in the room and been slain? Suppose further that Wolf fingers one who is not a C.I.A. agent and he or a family member is killed? Has *The Nation* become so selective in its concerns that it no longer finds voice to condemn the lack of due process when the *Covert Action Information Bulletin* makes an ex parte judgment as to who should be fingered and put in peril?

I and other civil libertarians supported the American Civil Liberties Union's defense of the Nazis' right to march in Skokie, Illinois, because we treasure the United States Constitution. But we were not silent as to our abhorrence of Nazi ideology and practice. *The Nation*'s failure to speak out against the deeds of Wolf and others engaged in his practices undermines its credibility as a defender of human-rights principles.

Next, I note an advertisement in the same issue inserted by the Palestine Human Rights Campaign. This would not evoke a comment from me except for the appearance of Ramsey Clark's name as a speaker at the conference announced in the ad plus *The Nation*'s repeated publicizing of the fact that, among others, Clark "writes" *The Nation*.

Clark is a proclaimed public fighter for human rights, but his approach has of late become something less than evenhanded. Permit me to illustrate:

In June 1980 I wrote Clark, who was threatened with criminal prosecution by President Carter in connection with his then recent activities in Iran. I thought the President's intervention was especially wrong. At the same time, I sent to Clark an authoritative paper I had recently read on the persecution by the Khomeini regime of Iranian Jews and the execution of one Albert Danielpour. Clark, displaying knowledge of the facts, replied as follows: "The execution of Albert Danielpour is a tragedy. . . ." Responding further, he wrote: "Of course we must protest all executions and violations of human rights, whether the victim be Jewish, Moslem, Christian, Bahai, Zoroastrian or atheist. I try. To call Zionism a crime violates human rights and human reason, not to mention human compassion."

I then wrote to Clark: "I am glad to have your private assurances in your June 30th reply. However, my concerns are such that they would not be allayed by a private communication. You, after all, have become a leader in that segment of public opinion in the United States which finds extenuating circumstances in the thrust and actions of the Iranian revolution. . . . I wonder, therefore, Ramsey, whether or not you will find [an] occasion in which you can publicly denounce the execution of Albert Danielpour and the multiple executions and other gross and persistent violations of human rights which have characterized and stained the Iranian revolution. While I cannot speak for any editor, I can speculate that many would welcome such an article from you." Clark deserves credit for his opposition to capital punishment in Iran as elsewhere; still, he has not, so far as I know, given public notice of his anguish over what is up to now the execution of at least 1,300 people by the Ayatollah's tribunals in Iran.

Of course, no parallel human-rights problem exists in Palestine, which, according to the ad in *The Nation*, seems now to be a primary focus of Clark's publicly expressed concern.

Morris B. Abram

REPLY

When a man is as universally beleaguered as the editor of *Covert Action*, it seems to us worth defending his civil liberties without going through the ritual of condemning activities whose genesis is, in any event, more complicated than Morris Abram's letter would suggest.

As far as Ramsey Clark goes, we are pleased to publish occasional articles by him and proud to advertise that fact. And even as we believe in free political speech for our advertisers [see editorial "*The Nation*'s Ad Policy," Jan. 27, 1979], it would not occur to us to audit our writers' extracurricular political activities or lack of them. —*The Editors*

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EDITORIALS.

The Nation's Congressman

Although we will have our say on the Presidential candidates in the coming weeks, *The Nation* in general (but especially in this year of uninspired national candidates) is less interested in endorsing candidates than in endorsing or criticizing ideas.

But we now take pleasure in departing from this policy for several reasons. Our magazine lives in Manhattan's 18th Congressional District, the old silk-stocking district, perhaps the best-known C.D. in the nation, having given New York John Lindsay and Ed Koch in recent years. But the citywide and even national import of the 18th's Representative is not our only concern. In this year of poverty at the top, the vitality of our national politics will have to find its source in the myriad local electoral choices voters will be confronted with this November. If we are disaffected from the national candidates and the national politics, men and women at the local level may provide an alternative to despair.

Fortunately, in the 18th C.D. we have an exemplary alternative. The race is between two men named Green: the incumbent, S. William Green, a Republican seeking his second full term in the House, and Mark Green, for ten years a close associate of Ralph Nader, a public-interest lawyer who until recently was director of Congress Watch, the Washington-based citizens' lobby, and, not incidentally, a *Nation* contributor. Mark has the Democratic and Liberal Party nominations. He won the former against two opponents, receiving nearly 80 percent of the primary vote.

In a confused and disappointing political year, it is good to be able to endorse Mark Green for Congress and to do so emphatically. A Mark Green victory holds promise not only for our own district and region but also for the entire country. When Mark finished Harvard Law School, where as editor in chief of the *Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review* he graduated *cum laude*, he did not head for Wall Street's high-paying firms. He went straight to Washington and the beginning of a decade's association with Ralph

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Nader. In that decade, Mark wrote more than 100 articles and nine books on public-interest matters, including the best seller *Who Runs Congress?* His ideas have invigorated the public-interest world. He has testified regularly before Congress on consumer, environmental, economic and other public-interest measures. He was instrumental in the fight to compensate victims of toxic and chemical waste and for laws to increase corporate democracy and accountability to shareholders and communities. He has written and worked to make lawyers and bar associations responsive to the public. Mark Green has a national reputation for the job he has done as a private citizen. Next to Nader himself, Mark is probably the most industrious and most successful public-interest lawyer of his generation.

Bill Green's voting record, on the other hand, is deficient. He has:

- § voted for block-grant financing of state welfare costs;
- § voted to decontrol domestic oil prices;
- § voted for the wasteful MX missile on three separate occasions (but now says he has changed his mind);
- § voted against a six-month moratorium on new nuclear reactor construction permits (intended to give regulators time to digest the lessons of Three Mile Island and translate them into new safety rules);
- § voted to cripple the Federal Trade Commission by giving Congress veto power over its rule-making activities;
- § supported raising the age minimum for Social Security from 65 to 68;
- § voted against amendments to the Consumer Credit Protection Act to protect persons using electronic transfers and against amendments to the Truth in Lending Law to prevent credit-card companies from raising interest rates retroactively, and
- § voted against allowing day-care tax credits for payments to relatives of working parents, while at the same time voting for tax benefits to the airline industry and other corporate taxpayers.

Beyond this uninspired record, Congressman Green's office was unable to tell us, after three days of telephone calls back and forth, whether or not the Congressman was supporting Reagan and the rest of the Republican ticket. Bill Green is not a bad fellow, but he is not a leader either.

Our argument is not that Mark Green is better than Bill Green. That is no contest: Bill Green is business as usual. Our real aim here is to applaud lustily when people of Mark Green's talents decide to enter public service. Mark Green is a symbol of a new generation of leadership, a harbinger of the Greening of America, if you will.

This is not to say that Mark Green is perfect. His criticisms of Ramsey Clark's trip to Iran, for example, we found misguided, giving the uncharacteristic appearance of playing the politically safe side of a controversy. We have had other differences with Mark and will undoubtedly continue to do so if he goes to Washington. Nonetheless, rarely does a voter, a district, or a magazine get a chance to support a citizens' spokesman of Mark Green's caliber, and we are proud to endorse his candidacy for Congress.

POLLAK FOR POCHODA

We are pleased to welcome Richard Pollak as *The Nation*'s new literary editor. Dick will replace Elizabeth Pochoda while she takes a year's leave of absence to write and teach. As many of our readers will recall, Dick Pollak was a founder and the editor of *More*, an influential monthly watchdog of the media.

We wish Elizabeth a productive and rewarding sabbatical; she will be greatly missed. But we feel fortunate to have Dick Pollak in her stead; his unique talents will add a fresh dimension to the Books & The Arts section.

Polish Prospects

"Poland is not yet lost"

The refrain of the Polish national hymn, sung by a people used to imperial domination, describes the present balance of forces in that astonishing country. The strikers looked power in the face, and power flinched. The struggle, however, is not yet over: we have seen only its initial phases. Free trade unions and authoritarian regimes are incompatible. Authentic participation by the labor force in economic and social decisions would make single-party rule impossible. If the recent agreements with the strikers in Gdansk and Silesia hold, state socialism in Poland will be fundamentally altered. In one step, Poland will have traveled the distance covered by Yugoslavia in the direction of pluralism. But will the agreements hold? At this point, no one can say.

It is customary to characterize the bosses of the Polish United Workers' Party as faceless bureaucrats. Certainly, there was something pathetic about the contrast in Gdansk between the Government's emissaries in sober business suits and the strikers' representatives. The present generation of party leaders were workers briefly, functionaries for most of their lives. Edward Gierek is an exception, but he is older —and in any case, no longer a leader. While head of the secret police, the new Party Secretary, Stanislaw Kania, had thrown hundreds if not thousands of dissidents into jail, hounded the intellectuals and attempted to discipline the church. It is absurd to suppose that he and his colleagues will renounce their privileges, join their erstwhile subjects in a new national compact and startle the world by taking socialism seriously.

The protest in Poland, unlike those in Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968, did not reflect of a conflict of ideology within the party. The pragmatic judgment by figures like Kania that it would be folly to drown the protests in blood is a long way from a conversion to the precepts of democratic socialism. We are witnessing a profound and prolonged struggle between nation and party, with some elements in the party desperately running after

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the nation. Before his dismissal, Gierek praised some party leaders for having been more prescient than others (well after he had fired them, of course). Men like Tadeusz Grabski and Stefan Olszowski are now back in office. It would be an error to mistake them for libertarians. Grabski said openly what everyone knew, that the economy was a disaster. Olszowski's anti-Semitic past is hardly encouraging. They are now riding with the punch, waiting for a chance to counterattack.

How may we explain the apparent powerlessness of the Soviet Union to influence events? The incursion into Afghanistan showed us a Soviet leadership with limited capacity to deal with reality, but for the moment, a fear of international complications inhibits the Soviet leaders. It would be nice if they reflected on the negative resonance of the Soviet model, but that clearly is too much to hope for. All we can say is that if Poland makes determined advances toward democratization, a Soviet intervention is much more likely.

In all of this bleakness, is there a ray of light? Credit where credit is due. The Carter Administration has done its best to use our real, if very limited, possibilities of influence and to eschew the cheap rhetoric with which it indulged the nation over Afghanistan. Indeed, elite American opinion has been surprisingly unanimous. The dangers of superpower confrontation in Central Europe are so great that nothing should be done that would increase these. We will extend bank credits to the Poles rather than futile exhortations. The President would serve the country (and his own electoral chances) better if he drew the inescapable conclusion explicitly, publicly and repeatedly: our primary aim is the avoidance of thermonuclear war. The Honorable Malcolm Toon, the American Ambassador in Moscow who left after denouncing our policy as too weak, adjured the Polish workers to "cool it." Joseph Kraft informed the Polish workers that their concerns were "trivial." Our blowhards' bluff has been called: they have run as fast as they could. Even Zbigniew Brzezinski has favored us with silence. The upcoming negotiations on Eurostrategic missiles may be the most effective help we can render the Poles. It could strengthen the hands of those in the Soviet Union who would prefer to retain détente.

Something else is at work. Our elites, like those in the Soviet bloc, fear nothing so much as spontaneity. The competence of the Polish workers, the obvious justice of their demands, their deep attachment to the integrity of their nation, do not appear to impress them. What disturbs them is the idea of a world marked by eruptions from below. *The Washington Post* rebuked Douglas Fraser for having said that the United Automobile Workers had sent funds to the strikers. Secretary of State Edmund Muskie called Lane Kirkland to his office to deplore the A.F.L.-C.I.O.'s declaration that it intended to aid the new Polish union. Surely, even the K.G.B. can see that the Poles did not need foreign encouragement to strike. No doubt, Kirkland would be in a better position had the A.F.L.-C.I.O. not collaborated with the Central Intelligence Agency in the past, but that is not now the issue. Willy Brandt, in his capacity as President of the Socialist International, has urged all of us to confront an issue of human rights with vast moral and political implications. Our own makers of opinion, to an embarrassing degree, have responded with their customary motto: "Bureaucrats of all nations unite, you have nothing to lose but your client states." It falls to the unions, given the real difficulties of the situation and the cultivated incapacity of our Government, to conduct foreign policy on a different plane. In any event, the West European unions have been extremely vocal.

Great difficulties now confront West European leaders like Helmut Schmidt, who can be accused neither of incompetence nor of excessive public reliance on political fables. Schmidt (and Valéry Giscard d'Estaing) had developed important ties with Gierek. A de facto accord among the French, East and West Germans and Poles did much to limit the consequences of the American-Soviet rupture over SALT II and Afghanistan. Schmidt has now had to cancel his September visit to East Germany. The neo-Stalinists in East Berlin could not incur the risks of a popular welcome for Schmidt in their cities as strikes were taking place in neighboring Poland. Schmidt himself asked his colleagues what he would do if he were in East Germany and the Polish strikers were fired upon.

The negative consequences of the Polish workers' struggle can spread quickly beyond Poland's borders: indeed, they already have. Our own capacity to influence events in Poland positively is not nearly so great. Wisdom lies in the recognition of this disturbing paradox. The success of the Polish workers threatens détente, yet only the success of détente may give the Polish workers room for maneuver. There is no way in which changes in the Eastern European regimes can occur without dangerous conflicts and shocks, just as there is no way in which popular discontent in the Eastern European societies can be contained by dogmatic simplification and bureaucratic rigidities.

Yet it remains to be seen whether an independent workers' movement can consolidate itself, and what concrete alliances it can effect with the church and with other segments of the nation. A group of independent technocrats recently asked party and state for reforms. The workers of Gdansk have not hesitated to associate the intellectuals with their movement, and the engineers at the shipyards actually struck. A broad movement for reform, then, is already in existence. One of its parliamentary spokesmen, the distinguished sociologist Jan Szczepanski, declared the other day that Parliament had to become more than a rubber stamp. It is sobering to recollect that these words were spoken in Parliament by others as long ago as 1956. Poland, then, is not yet lost. It has not, however, been won.

NORMAN BIRNBAUM

After participating in the Edward Kennedy campaign and (more briefly) in the Ronald Dellums campaign, Norman Birnbaum has resumed teaching at Georgetown University Law Center.

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VARIATIONS

CALVIN TRILLIN

Although a full week has passed since First Lady Nancy Reagan resumed her regular schedule, the White House remains unsuccessful in its efforts to still rumors that the cause of her brief absence was an operation for the surgical removal of her adoring smile.

Officially, the White House has not even acknowledged that Mrs. Reagan's apparent inability to look at her husband with any expression other than an adoring smile may have caused the President some embarrassment at official functions that called for a certain solemnity—most recently at his announcement that Social Security checks would henceforth be sent only to those Americans who had reached what he described as "the more realistic retirement age" of 82.

Such comments began to find their way into print last fall, when President Reagan made his long-awaited announcement on how he intended to increase defense spending and reduce income taxes at the same time—announcing a plan that, shorn of its rhetoric, seemed to be little more than that old conservative-Republican chestnut of an "across-the-board bread tax." Some reporters interpreted the smile Mrs. Reagan wore while the President proposed a "disincentive surcharge" on day-old bread as reflecting a lack of sympathy for the poor.

Barely a month later, when the President and Mrs. Reagan flew to Jidda for the funeral of the Saudi Prime Minister, most foreign affairs analysts concluded that whatever diplomatic gain was realized by the gesture was probably offset by the widely distributed photo of the First Lady beaming amid a clot of wailing Arab women as the President delivered a eulogy. The criticism was summed up by the semiofficial Jordanian daily *El Shri*, which said in a lead editorial that Mrs. Reagan's adoring smile was "the best argument we in the Moslem world have seen for the reinstitution of the veil."

At the time, President Reagan was able to brush aside a press conference question about the First Lady's smile by recalling the film debut of the song "Let a Smile Be Your Umbrella" and telling several anecdotes about Gene Kelly's antics on Hollywood sets. He had the confidence that might have been expected from someone who, alone among modern Presidents, seemed to be remarkably free of embarrassments caused by family members. A strong desire to avoid such embarrassments rather than any coldness in the family has been offered privately by Presidential aides as the reason President and Mrs. Reagan have not yet invited any of their children to the White House. The closest thing to a family flap the Administration has undergone was the quickly forgotten NBC interview with two freelance photographers who said there was reason to believe that the President's younger son, Ron, did not in fact know his father when he saw him—the photographers having been stalking Ron on Fifth Avenue when he shouted "Hiya Dad!" to a man who turned out to be Joel McCrea.

Although President Reagan can still deal from strength where his family's behavior is concerned, the First Lady's absence has reopened a question potentially much more dangerous: In the sense that the Nixon Administration was overwhelmed by Watergate and the Johnson Administration was undermined by Vietnam, has the Reagan Administration been thrown off balance by its multifaceted connection with plastic surgery? During the campaign, Mr. Reagan vigorously denied suggestions that he himself had undergone some cosmetic facial surgery; most observers here think that the country had come to believe Mr. Reagan's denials, and that he was badly advised to repeat them in his first State of the Union Address. Within weeks, there was a mild controversy about his choosing as Surgeon General a physician who had once been known as "The Tummy Tuck King of Palm Beach." Still, the matter might have faded from public memory if the President had not startled his conservative followers with his support of a policy permitting welfare recipients to receive facelifts on Medicaid.

Now, reporters are again asking questions about plastic surgery. Why, they want to know, has the only *amicus curiae* brief filed by the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department been in defense of the plastic surgeon appealing the judgment awarded against him in the so-called Misplaced Belly Button Case? Why has Betty Ford, who has openly spoken of her facelift, been at the White House for so many state functions to which her husband, the former President, was not invited?

The President's supporters maintain that the liberal press, desperate to find a weak spot in the Simple Deal program of the Reagan Administration, has been irresponsible and even libelous. It is true that, whether *The New York Times* wishes to call its later version of the events a correction or a "further refinement," no one can now say for certain that a nurse present during Vice President George Bush's annual physical examination definitely overheard Mr. Bush ask the attending physicians if something might be done to make him look "a little less preppie around the eyes."

The question the White House has not been able to answer satisfactorily, though, is why Mrs. Reagan has not smiled adoringly at the President since her return; if she did indeed have a Novocain injection during some dental work, it should have worn off by now. There is now speculation in Washington—based on no known scientific evidence—that the surgical removal of a smile, if it indeed took place, might have led to an overall change in attitude. There could be any number of explanations for the fact that the First Lady emitted a sigh during last Tuesday's White House ceremony for the National Association of Manufacturers' Depreciator of the Year, at about the time the President was repeating his familiar story about how many people General Motors had to employ to fill out Government forms. It is indicative of White House sensitivity on the entire subject that it chose to release a fourteen-page white paper on the incident, and to furnish affidavits denying that the First Lady turned to the person on her right and said, "If I have to listen to that story one more time I'll simply collapse."

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ARTICLES.

FEELING THE PINOCHET

The High Cost Of Monetarism In Chile

CYNTHIA BROWN

On September 11, the seventh anniversary of the coup that ousted Salvador Allende, Chileans voted on a new Constitution. This document would give Gen. Augusto Pinochet eight more years as president and, after that, the power to select a successor presidential candidate—not excluding himself—for a further eight-year term. There had been no doubt that the Constitution would be ratified. All the opposition parties labeled the referendum a farce. There was no electoral registration to guard against fraud, and the country had, in the past four months, experienced a wave of intensified repression.

Nor is there debate as to what Pinochet intends to deliver, politically; in seven years, his program has been made clear, and he has repeatedly affirmed that Chileans are not ready for democracy.

There is, however, a certain amount of confusion as to whether Pinochet has brought progress to Chile in economic terms—a confusion spread in part by the junta's own publicity efforts and in part by conservative economists in the United States. The junta's supposed economic successes are increasingly touted to justify its authoritarianism.

Past efforts to improve the junta's image—the release of political prisoners in 1976, the secret police's change of name (from DINA to CNI) in 1977, protestations of innocence in the assassination of Orlando Letelier—have not been internationally successful. But now the Letelier case has faded as an issue in U.S.-Chilean relations, and President Jimmy Carter has muted his human-rights rhetoric. The World Bank has just granted a $35 million loan to Chile for water-treatment facilities, and its January report on Chile praises the regime for having "achieved an economic turnaround without precedent" in Chilean history. Apologists for the junta's economic program are being emboldened by recent economic indicators to make statements like, "National prosperity has grown by leaps and bounds," as an editorial in *Barron's* of February 18 put it.

Unfortunately, such claims are more fantasy than fact. Since Chile's economic performance is being held up as a model for other developing nations, since that performance is being used as a justification for overlooking human-rights violations (see the aforementioned *Barron's* editorial) and since the World Bank is allegedly supporting national development, a separation of fact from fantasy is in order.

Since 1938, the Chilean Government had assumed an increasing responsibility for social services (free health care, subsidized education and housing construction) and for national investment, of which up to 75 percent had come from the Government. Under a functioning democracy, the increasing Government involvement in national development had created a wider social influence over economic decisions. Fundamental was a program of import substitution intended to nurture domestic industry and create a mass consumer market. This was essentially the rationale for Allende's nationalization of the copper mines and his efforts to beef up housing and industry, just as it had been the idea behind the imposition of high tariff barriers and the passage of the 1967 agrarian-reform law under previous administrations. Allende was a socialist but the changes he made in 1970-73 were in fact less radical, in relation to Chile's preceding governments, than have been the changes imposed by the junta. The World Bank's report tacitly recognized this, when it pointed to a continuity of state economic policies until the coup that ousted Allende and installed the Pinochet regime.

Immediately after the coup, the junta dismantled the import-substitution model and replaced it with a monetarist model, based on the "free market" teachings of American economist Milton Friedman and his followers at the University of Chicago. The new program relies on market forces to increase productivity and efficiency by forcing businesses to compete without state "interference." Trade barriers are out, in line with the theory that "free" trade is part and parcel of "economic freedom." The state withdraws from the marketplace and cuts back subsidies, social services, regulations and tariffs with an eye to eliminating these as soon and completely as possible.

The result has been the worst depression in Chile since the 1930s. The junta's dismantling of the state economic apparatus, its cap on real wages and its lifting of price controls so drastically reduced internal demand and productive output that the economy has yet to recover to 1972 levels in major sectors like construction and manufacture. Thus, Chile's average 8 percent annual increase in its gross national product since 1977 is impressive only if examined without regard for history because it represents no more than a partial recovery from a depression that monetarist measures induced.

Likewise, the 1979 inflation rate of 38 percent actually represents only partial relief from pain that could have been avoided. The junta called inflation its primary target, accusing Allende of having encouraged overconsumption. But while Allende is generally held responsible for runaway inflation in 1973, it was the junta's policies after the September coup that pushed the 1973 inflation rate to 1,000 percent. (Incidentally, this 1,000 percent figure is often misleadingly hung on the Allende regime; even the World Bank makes this quite significant error. Granted that the country was already in a severe inflationary spiral, the junta deliberately contributed to its escalation by "releasing"

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market forces—and then was able to declare itself anti-inflationary when it restricted wages.) Had Allende finished the year, according to his administration's projections, inflation would have been 350 percent—a very unsatisfactory level, but far less than what actually occurred under the Pinochet Government four months after it came to power. During Pinochet's first two years, moreover, inflation exceeded the highest levels—an annual rate of 300 percent for July-August 1973—experienced under Allende. In 1974, inflation was 376 percent; in 1975, 340 percent. And this in spite of easy foreign loans and complete social control, which Allende's administration had not enjoyed.

Pinochet could have opted for monetary reform to hold down inflation; the junta had the power, internally, to do so. But it chose to let inflation run wild so that by 1975, per-capita income was below 1963 levels. What happened in that brief time was a massive transferral of income from wage- and salary-earners to those who owned capital—the reversal of thirty-five years of economic development. [See Orlando Letelier, " 'Chicago Boys' in Chile," *The Nation*, August 28, 1976.] Under Allende, with unemployment down to around 3 percent and wages adjusted quarterly for cost of living, the portion of national income in the hands of working people rose from 53 percent in 1970 to 65 percent in 1971. But by 1975, under Pinochet, with unemployment officially set at 20 percent (unofficially over 30 percent), with prices climbing and no commensurate wage adjustments, this share fell to 40 percent.

The regime's 1975 "shock treatment"—cutbacks on credit and public spending, including investment—intensified this trend by further damaging industry. (The G.N.P. fell 13 percent that year; industrial production fell 27 percent, and construction 31 percent. Of 2,000 textile firms operating in 1974, 400 had collapsed by mid-1978. Industries were operating at an average 58 percent of capacity in 1976-77.) Thus, the so-called attack on inflation, which took the route of reducing employment and consumption, traumatized Chile's developmental base. It is worth noting two other things here as well: that the current level of just under 40 percent inflation is no better than Chile's average in the late 1960s, when a liberal administration provided more jobs and subsidized necessary services, and that the 1979 rate was 8 percent higher than 1978's, suggesting possible new problems.

Moreover, recovery from the depression has been halting. Construction in 1978 was two-thirds of the 1972 level. In agriculture, where ownership is once again highly concentrated following the reversal of land reform and a higher rate of farm sell-offs induced by the depression, production has seesawed wildly, rising 27 percent in 1976-77 and falling an equal amount the following year. Industry's portion of the G.N.P., 26 percent in 1973, had recovered to only 20 percent in 1978—a substantial regression in real terms.

Where, then, is evidence of the unprecedented "economic turnaround" praised by the World Bank? Principally in the growth of trade and finance. The low-tariff policy has brought a flood of imports, primarily luxury goods, and the absence of a mass internal market has meant that virtually all Chile can produce is available for export—the food, shoes, clothing and manufactured goods that were formerly consumed by Chileans. Such new, nontraditional exports grew 40 percent in 1979, even more than in the two preceding years. This diversification leads the World Bank to enthusiastically compare Chile to Hong Kong, Singapore, et al. (although in those countries industrial production has grown in real terms, while in Chile it has not, and diversification of exports is possible mainly because most Chileans cannot buy basic commodities).

In finance the economic model has had extraordinary results: while manufacture and construction fell 22 percent between 1972 and 1977, banking and finance grew by 65 percent. In 1975, investment in financial transactions surpassed productive investment by more than two to one. Those with liquid capital were making new fortunes lending at interest rates which at times reached 10 percent a month. Banks and speculators consolidated their holdings in the credit crunch, as small and medium-sized manufacturers and farmers went bankrupt, and formerly state-owned companies were being bought cheaply.

The result, documented in a book by Fernando Dahse published last November in Chile, was "a process of accumulation and capital concentration of a really spectacular magnitude." That study, *The Map of Extreme Wealth*, covers the fifty-seven large Chilean "economic groups," most of them family-based. All together they now "control, in practice, the entire banking system, the most important *financieras* [lending agencies that set rates freely], the great majority of insurance companies, the large wholesale distributors and the most important mass communications media." Concentration, in fact, is greater than even that description suggests. The two wealthiest groups control more than half the capital of Chile's 200 largest corporations. The larger controls 28 percent of private Chilean capital; the other, 23 percent; the top five together, 80 percent.

The rapid concentration of wealth, beyond anything known in Chile before, has led to unprecedented consumption as well. One visitor to Chile in 1978 reported that the number of expensive restaurants and Mercedes Benzes in Santiago was "astounding." While Chile's poorest 20 percent spend about 5 percent of national income these days, the richest 20 percent spend ten times that. Because speculation is so lucrative and uncontrolled, the private sector is not investing in productive activity except for exports. As a result, the economy cannot grow because even the upkeep of existing plants is being neglected. A recently released Central Bank report shows that in January and February of this year, only $81.5 million was spent for capital goods and replacement parts; this works out to a yearly level well below the 5 percent of G.N.P. which is generally considered the absolute minimum necessary for upkeep. Chile is awash in capital, but it is not productive, and most of it is foreign, so it cannot be accumulated as a basis for real economic growth. Chilean industry, after all, cannot supply the elite's needs so efficiently as can imports, and there is still no domestic mass market: unemployment is 13 percent (unof-

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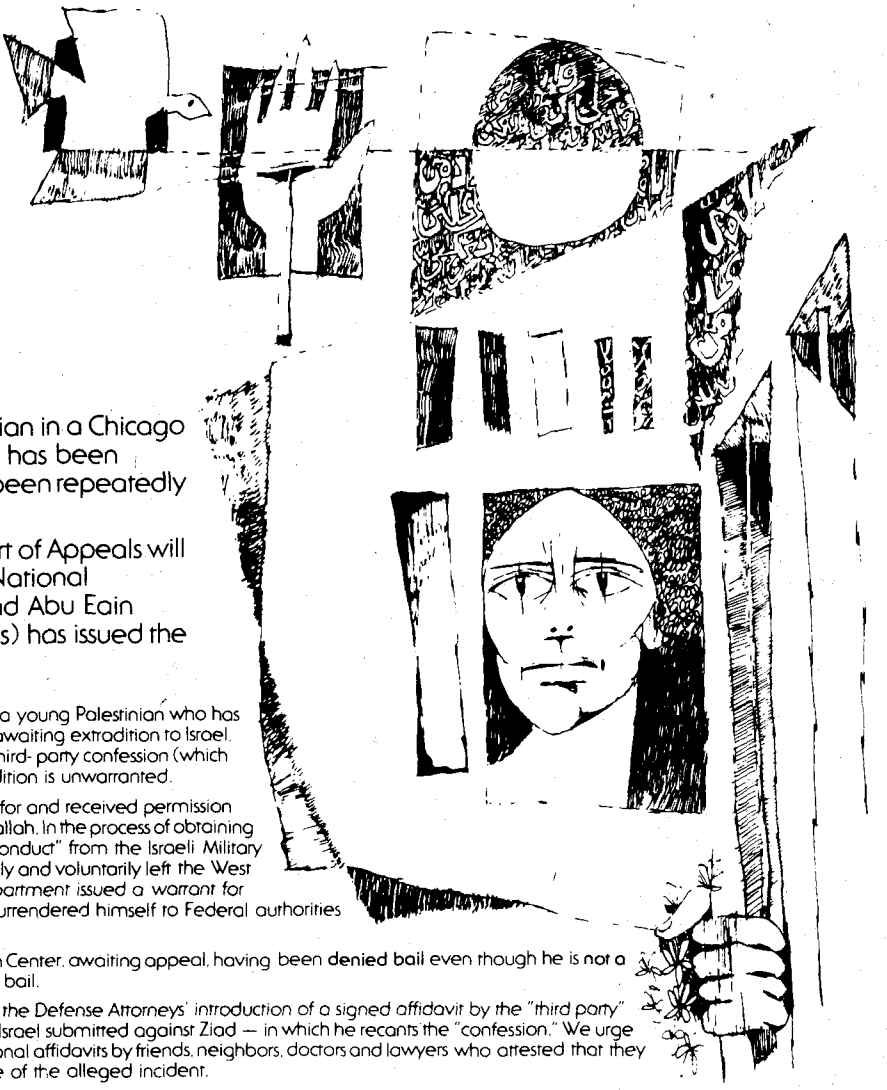
One Year Is Too Long . . .

ZIAD ABU EAIN SHOULD GO FREE.



Ziad Abu Eain is a 20-year-old Palestinian in a Chicago jail awaiting extradition to Israel. Ziad has been imprisoned for over one year and has been repeatedly denied bail.

On September 26, 1980, the U.S. Court of Appeals will hear oral arguments in his case. The National Emergency Committee to Defend Ziad Abu Eain (honorary Chairperson Rev. Ben Chavis) has issued the following statement:

We are concerned about the fate of Ziad Abu Eain, a young Palestinian who has been imprisoned in Chicago since August 21, 1979, awaiting extradition to Israel. Since the only evidence against Ziad Abu Eain was a third- party confession (which has since been recanted), we believe that his extradition is unwarranted.

Before coming to this country, Ziad Abu Eain applied for and received permission from Israeli authorities to leave his native town of Ramallah. In the process of obtaining an exit permit, he received a "Certificate of Good Conduct" from the Israeli Military Government in the West Bank and subsequently legally and voluntarily left the West Bank for the United States. When the U.S. Justice Department issued a warrant for Mr. Abu Eain's arrest in August 1979, he voluntarily surrendered himself to Federal authorities in Chicago.

Today Ziad Abu Eain sits in the Metropolitan Correction Center, awaiting appeal, having been **denied bail** even though he is **not a fugitive.** We urge the authorities to grant Mr. Abu Eain bail.

We protest the U.S. Magistrate's decision not to allow the Defense Attorneys' introduction of a signed affidavit by the "third party" prisoner — whose confession was the **sole evidence** Israel submitted against Ziad — in which he recants the "confession." We urge the Appeals Court to consider this affidavit and additional affidavits by friends, neighbors, doctors and lawyers who attested that they saw Ziad in Ramallah in his family store on the date of the alleged incident.

We are disturbed by evidence that seems to indicate that the Department of State is seeking to use this case to try to erase the political offense exception to extradition requests, grounds upheld in previous extradition cases. By having Louis Fields (an assistant in the Department of State's legal affairs office) testify that the alleged offense was considered by the Department of State a "common crime" (and thus political exception does not apply) and by submitting a letter into evidence from K.E. Malmborg (Assistant Legal Advisor for Management, Department of State), the Department of State has acted prejudicially without precedent to influence the court and usurp the judicial function.

Given the absence of competent evidence, "probable cause" cannot be demonstrated. Therefore, we call upon the Appeals Court to apply the law and find Ziad non-extraditable. We also call upon the Secretary of State to use his discretionary power and refuse extradition. Under current American extradition law, the court or Secretary of State may use this discretion if the United States doubts that the foreign legal process would be free of bias and duress.

Partial list of endorsers:

Rev. Ralph Abernathy
James Abourezk
Ibrahim Abu-Lughod
Eqbal and Julie Ahmad
Richard Barnet
Eric Bentley
Daniel Berrigan
Dennis Brutus
Josephine Butler
Denise Carty-Bennia
Rev. Ben Chavis*
Noam Chomsky
Ramsey Clark
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Richard Falk
Frances Fitzgerald
Frank Jackalone
Rev. Frederick Douglass Kirkpatrick
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Mariam and Edward Said*
Henry Schwartzschild
Rev. William Starr
Hope Stevens
I.F. Stone
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Jim Wallis
Howard Zinn
James Zogby*

*Co-ordinators of the National Emergency Committee to Defend Ziad Abu Eain

National Emergency Committee
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ficially over 20 percent, counting those the Government employs, at lower than minimum wage, for short-term jobs like street sweeping) and the minimum wage is $118 a month, while Santiago's cost of living exceeds New York City's by 20 percent.

Another benefit for the moneyed elite is reflected in the growth of Chile's external debt since 1974, to the point where repayment now consumes the equivalent of half of export earnings. Because the high level of consumption and speculation of the wealthy has left them with little savings to invest in operation and improvement of their enterprises, outside capital has been required to make up the difference. Borrowing abroad has also provided a good way to avoid the exorbitant real interest rates—now running at 40 to 70 percent—which economic "freedom" has made so profitable at home. As a result, Chile's external debt has risen much faster than its oil bills—from $3.5 billion in 1973 to $8.5 billion at the end of last year, making it the second-highest per-capita foreign debt (after Israel's) in the world. About half of this is in short-term, high-interest credit from commercial banks, mainly in the United States, much of it supporting the private sector's financial speculation and omnivorous spending habits (and not unprofitably). In 1978, while the total debt rose nearly 25 percent, the private sector's share increased by almost 70 percent, to $1.4 billion. The World Bank report is therefore unconsciously ironic when it concludes that the future success of the monetarist model "rests heavily on the largely untested entrepreneurship of Chile's private sector." For at least the past three years, Chile's private sector has had ample foreign capital, in addition to its income, with which to invest in competitive "entrepreneurial" activities, and it has not done so. Nor has it any incentive to do so while internal demand is so limited.

Demand will remain limited because the model offers little prospect of increased long-term employment. The commercial sector can expand only so much; and while the junta's advertising supplements boast that foreign investors are taking great interest in Chile, actual foreign investment has reached barely 10 percent of approved investment applications, or a paltry $400 million over six years. Also, 90 percent of approved investment is in mining. (The Government is selling off state-owned copper mines and mine sites.) In this sector, construction will create some short-term jobs if investments materialize, but mining itself is capital-intensive. This situation completely gives the lie to claims that "economic freedom" will bring employment gains and overall social progress. Pinochet needs much broader investment to even appear credible, and foreign companies are still not rushing in.

Finally, and not incidentally, Chile's economic program was imposed by brute force and is carried on by force. Given the greater economic inequalities that monetarism has engendered, the recent economic situation only strengthens the need for repression, as the population becomes increasingly polarized. Contrary to what apologists like *Barron's* imply, there has been no political opening; opposition parties, including the Christian Democrats, are still illegal. The Labor Plan completed last July legalizes strikebreaking, allows collective bargaining only plant by plant and encourages the proliferation of many separate bargaining units within a single shop. All these measures are clearly designed to prevent effective wage actions. (Real wages continued to decline last year.) A recent decree-law permits internal exile for three months without trial. The state of emergency was toughened early this year, so that it now resembles the lifted state of siege. And since May, more than 1,200 people have been swept up in the largest campaign of mass arrests since Pinochet's first year in power. The murder of an army intelligence colonel in July prompted massive sweeps, as the Government immediately blamed the extreme left. (The murder, in daylight on a crowded street with military barracks nearby, is increasingly thought to have been an inside job, indicative of tensions within the security forces. This hypothesis is strengthened by the fact that the head of the secret police, Gen. Odlanier Mena Salinas, resigned soon after the assassination and has said that the left was not responsible.) According to the Catholic Church, torture is being used even on short-term detainees. Cardinal Raul Silva Henríquez, active in human-rights work, has been threatened with death. It appears that this escalation of terror is largely due to a growth of opposition influence and activism. The economic model's complete failure to promote development dictates that repression continue.

Despite his talk of instituting an "authoritarian democracy," Pinochet in fact has gathered power exclusively to himself. Thus, should economic interests wish to dislodge him to improve the Government's image and break its international isolation, he is unlikely to step aside as Brazilian generals do so gracefully.

But demands are getting tougher. The regime must keep its economic indicators booming; otherwise those approved investments will not materialize and broader investments will not even be thought about. Whether Pinochet can do this, though, is open to question. He faces broadening internal opposition and uncontrollable external pressures.

Internally, even some of Chile's wealthy are uncomfortable: Santiago's Chamber of Commerce and the right-wing *El Mercurio* have protested the financial groups' exclusive control; exporters are reportedly worried by the 1979 inflation rate (38 percent, up from 30 percent in 1978); political opposition now includes some sectors of the traditional right. Meanwhile, the parties of the left are beginning to operate again in unions and neighborhoods. Last August the Christian Democratic leader Eduardo Frei publicly called for a return to democracy, and this past month, denouncing the referendum, he called for the immediate formation of a transitional government. Externally, Chile's dependence upon exports makes it exceptionally vulnerable to a U.S. recession, which will affect exports across the board: clothing, wool, copper used in U.S. cars, timber used in housing and many other products. And foreign commercial credit is tightening. As *The New York Times* reported on April 14, U.S. commercial banks are balking at large new loan requests from developing countries. One high-level

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United Nations analyst considers it entirely possible that Chile's exports will drop, and debt repayment problems will grow, to a point where Pinochet will have to ask for debt renegotiation within a year.

International finance is probably willing to do whatever is necessary to keep Chilean monetarism afloat. The model's success has taken on enormous symbolic importance, and foreign banking interests are making out very well indeed. But long-term investors like a reasonably sure thing, and even *Business Week* last November was still calling Chile an "experiment" for which some "serious problems remain"—hardly a full endorsement. While Pinochet appears secure for the immediate future, the polarization that the model has created, and which will inevitably intensify, is likely to make Chile a very uncertain proposition once any opening does occur. It is not surprising, then, that most outside money is going into financial ventures; it can be pulled out easily if the carrousel slows down. Very good business, of course, but nothing to do with social welfare and solid economic progress. □

TIME FOR GASOHOL

America's Home-Grown Fuel

FRED J. COOK

Gasohol is "the bird in hand" that can produce as much as one billion gallons of alcohol in 1981 to help reduce the nation's imports of foreign oil, but experts who agree that gasohol can make an even larger contribution by the mid-1980s warn that the Government's bias toward synfuels will make their bird in hand an endangered species.

The battle lines between farm-produced alcohol for the gasohol program and coal gasification projects that will be controlled by big corporations (many of them representing the major oil companies which own approximately half of the coal reserves of the nation) are now being drawn in the implementation of President Jimmy Carter's synfuels program. It is another chapter in the saga of David vs. Goliath.

First indications are that the farmers—those independent cusses who can produce enough alcohol on their own farms to be energy self-sufficient and through co-ops can supply excess quantities for the nation—are going to get a trickle of the $20 billion allocated for the synfuels program. But the big money will gravitate to big money.

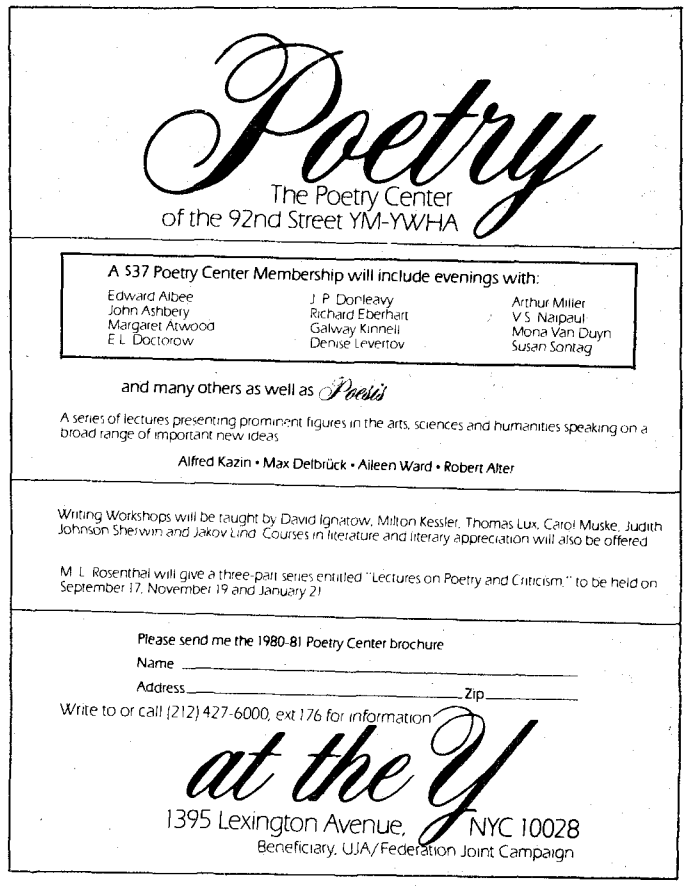
For instance, even as gasohol advocates were attempting to establish the validity of their program in a two-day hearing in Washington in mid-June, Congress was mandating the first big bonanza for coal gasification. It wrote into the synfuels act a $22 million grant for Great Plains Coal Gasification Associates in Beulah, North Dakota. The Department of Energy has backed up the grant with a $250 million loan guarantee. This is to speed construction of a $2 billion plant, which is expected to take four years to build and to produce 137.5 million cubic feet a day of pipeline-quality gas.

This is the kind of project that induced Barry Commoner, the environmentalist and Presidential candidate of the Citizens Party, to denounce the synfuels act even as it was being passed. Gasification from coal is "a very nasty process," producing high amounts of toxic materials, he told the National Alcohol Fuels Commission. "The synthetic fuels legislation . . . is a very bad piece of legislation and could well become a national disaster," he declared, citing, among other things, the recent ecological devastation of an Illinois county where coal has been strip mined.

The lopsidedness of the synfuels legislation against which Commoner inveighed is apparent in the manner in which the Government's largess is being divided. Out of the $20 billion allotted for loans and outright grants this year, only $1.45 billion will further gasohol research and production. The bulk of the money, more than $18 billion, will go to the big corporate interests backing oil shale, tar sands and coal gasification projects.

Leaving aside the question of ecological disasters, the massive Federal commitment to multibillion-dollar plants

Fred J. Cook, a regular contributor to The Nation, *won the Newspaper Guild of New York's 1980 "Page One" Award for Crusading Journalism for his recent series of articles on energy issues. Research support for this article was provided by the Fund for Investigative Journalism.*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represents, as one expert said, "a waste of time, energy and money." Even the Carter Administration's claims make its own program look inadequate. The Administration projects that its twelve-year, $88 billion effort will produce a mere 500,000 barrels of oil a day in 1987 and 2 million barrels a day in 1992. After twelve years of prodigious effort and mind-boggling expenditure, this modest production of fuel would leave Americans just about where they are now —helpless vassals of the sheiks of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. Since we now import between 7 million and 8 million barrels of oil a day, the 2-million-barrel-a-day production by 1992, even if achieved, is not going to free us from OPEC's rapacious demands for ever higher prices. Common sense says the nation must find better and quicker ways of becoming energy self-sufficient.

The United States possesses such colossal reserves of natural gas that this fuel alone will last us for centuries. [See Cook, "The Natural Gas Boom," *The Nation*, July 12.] Natural gas could take care of all the residential, commercial and industrial needs of the nation. It could also be turned into liquid fuel to supply our transportation needs; but a wise national policy might well decide not to impose such a strain on this ultimately finite resource, and if that were the case we would need alternative, renewable fuels to replace the 100 billion gallons of gasoline we use annually on our highways.

There are two ways to go, and Big Oil, which has until now exerted a stranglehold on the Department of Energy and the Carter Administration, can be guaranteed to be unhappy with both of them. The first alternative is gasohol; the second, hydrogen hydrides. Both pose the threat to Big Oil of making gasoline practically obsolete as a motor fuel.

Gasohol—the bird in hand, as Senator Max Baucus of Montana called it—is here now. The 90 percent gasoline-10 percent alcohol mixture is already being marketed at some 2,000 service stations across the nation, and most experts agree that the potential of alcohol fuels, derived from corn and other grains, has scarcely been tapped.

Hydrogen hydrides (hydrogen gas combined with stabilizing substances that produce an ammonialike mixture) are available now on an experimental basis, but there is increasing evidence that full-scale commercial production is just down the road. The hydrogen alternative is based on the same system that has powered our NASA spacecraft: the use of photovoltaic cells to turn the sun's heat directly into energy. This electrical energy is then used to split the hydrogen atom from water. The high cost of handmade photovoltaic cells has been, until now, a deterrent to commercial development of such a system. But a maverick California professor, Dr. Gerald Schaflander, and his team have perfected an automated process for producing photovoltaic cells cheaply. Using only the sun's energy and the hydrogen content of water, both limitless resources, Schaflander has produced a substance he calls Hy-Fuel. He has demonstrated the advantages of Hy-Fuel in two cross-country trips in Chevrolets with slightly modified engines, and on July 1 he had his first commercial delivery of Hy-Fuel ready for a large Idaho potato producer.

The possibilities in this hydrogen alternative appear almost limitless since, as Schaflander says, "the sun is about the only thing the big oil companies haven't bought up and controlled." But taking full advantage of this opportunity requires getting around the corporate roadblocks thrown up by the interlocking petroleum-banking system—and then acquiring the capital needed to expand Schaflander's process into an energy farm that would be capable of producing 2.85 million gallons of Hy-Fuel *a day*, according to the most conservative estimates of his scientific team. This is a prospect I shall analyze in a later article, but for now let's look at Senator Baucus's more immediate bird in hand—gasohol.

There are two types of alcohol fuels—ethanol, produced from grains, and methanol, produced from coal or forest and municipal wastes. Either can be mixed with gasoline, but ethanol is highly preferable. Barbara Blum, deputy administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, testified at the National Alcohol Fuels Commission hearings: "Our evaluation of methanol shows that it is not as compatible with gasoline as ethanol at concentrations approaching or exceeding 10 percent. Predictably, evaporative emissions are higher, vapor locking is more of a problem, material compatibility problems are more apparent, phase separation in the supply chain and in vehicles is more of a problem, and the cleansing effect in pipelines, storage tanks and auto tanks are greater than with ethanol. General Motors and Chrysler have stated that new car warranties will remain in effect *only* for ethanol blends."

Yet the Carter Administration, ignoring this and a whole body of related scientific evidence, is throwing its major efforts into coal gasification and liquefaction which produce the inferior fuel—methanol. It is true that methanol can be cleaned up by extra refining processes, but this adds to its cost and reduces the energy input-output equation.

The evidence is clear that we should rely, for the immediate future, on ethanol as the only sensible, quick alternative to fossil fuels. It is the route that Brazil took five years ago. This year, some 250,000 Brazilian cars will be built to run on pure ethanol, and an additional 70,000 existing cars will be converted to run on unblended alcohol. Why hasn't the United States, with all its vaunted technology, adopted a similar program?

A good part of the answer may be found in the anti-alcohol propaganda campaign waged by the Mobil Corporation and other Big Oil interests. (Texaco, which has embraced gasohol and markets it at its pumps, is a notable exception.) The propaganda has lined up these arguments: It takes more energy to produce ethanol than ethanol can deliver in the fuel tank and so ethanol is an energy loser; diverting corn and other crops to alcohol production will reduce food supplies and force upon us an inhuman choice: food or fuel; food costs will skyrocket, and more intensive farming will erode the land.

All of these arguments were easily demolished by expert witnesses at the alcohol commission hearings. Ironically, the

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Political Devotions

Edward Sorel

AH KNOW AH PROMISED THAT IF YOU MADE ME PRESIDENT AH'D NEVUH ASK YOU FOR ANYTHING ELSE...
...BUT IF I DON'T GET THOSE HOSTAGES OUT OF IRAN BEFORE THE ELECTION I'M GOING TO BE AN EX-PRESIDENT
OH, GOD! TELL ME HOW TO GET THEM OUT! SPEAK TO ME!!
I DIDN'T REALLY THINK HE'D TALK... THESE TERRORISTS ALWAYS STICK TOGETHER.
Edward Sorel

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first and most oft-repeated contention—that ethanol is an energy loser—can be applied with equal force, as the oil companies must know, to their own gasoline production. Denis Hayes, director of the Solar Research Institute, pointed out: "More energy must enter the refinery than leaves the refinery. In fact, for every 100 gallons of gasoline that we use, at least 10 and as many as 20 gallons of oil or equivalent natural gas must be used in the refinery."

The food versus fuel argument is equally fallacious. Hayes testified, and other experts have given similar figures, that "only 5 percent of corn, 2 percent of soybeans, but 70 percent of wheat is eaten directly by human beings." Since wheat is the least useful grain for alcohol production, human consumption of wheat is not threatened. But where does all the corn go? It goes into feedstock for cattle. Even the corn that we export to a supposedly hungry world goes not to feed people but to nourish cattle. As one witness said: "It doesn't feed the poor, but makes the fat fatter."

There is another astonishing fallacy in the food versus fuel contention. It is simply this: Turning corn into ethanol does not rob the country of foodstuffs; instead, it produces rich byproducts that feed cattle even more effectively than the original corn would (with one minor exception, lack of starch). In addition, it yields other products whose value should be considered in estimating the cost of producing ethanol.

Dwayne Andreas, chairman of the board and chief executive of the Archer Daniels Midland Company, the largest ethanol producer in the nation, put it this way: "The fallacy of those who charge in theoretical arguments about whether corn should be used for food or fuel is that they fail to understand that under modern, efficient, refinery processes the same bushel of corn can be utilized for both. In effect, the production of power alcohol for gasohol allows the country to more fully utilize our corn crop, a crop which we have at times deliberately cut back by set-aside and diversion payments because we lacked adequate markets at fair prices for all the corn our farmers could produce."

From each 65-pound bushel of corn, Andreas said, the A.D.M. plant in Decatur, Illinois, obtains: 1.7 pounds of corn oil, enough to make 2 pounds of premium-quality margarine; 3 pounds of corn gluten meal, a 60 percent protein product greatly in demand by the chicken industry for broilers and laying hens; 14.5 pounds of corn gluten feed, a 21 percent protein product widely used as a protein source in feedstock rations; between 2.5 and 2.6 gallons of 200-proof ethanol, and 15 pounds of CO_2, used to carbonate beverages and in the "flash freezing" of prepared meat, bakery and food items. CO_2 is also being used for the regeneration of "old," supposedly worked-out oil wells.

All of these products are lost in the old-style, direct feeding of corn to animals, and so it should be apparent that, instead of losing by distilling alcohol from corn, the nation actually gains. The high-protein byproducts of the distilling process are even more nutritious than the original corn because they are more easily digestible by cattle. The only ingredient lost in the process is starch, which can easily be replaced from other sources.

This is not all. Andreas, a forward-looking businessman, has detailed further advantages to be derived from ethanol production: "We are developing a hydroponics operation using the 'waste heat' from the corn milling/alcohol plant as a heat source for 'greenhouses' and using the CO_2 generated from fermentation to accelerate plant growth and maturity. . . . Such vegetables as lettuce, tomatoes and cucumbers can be produced on a year-round basis in northern locations close to large markets, bypassing the need to transport them from more distant production areas. This will be a further improvement of the favorable food/fuel cycle for the wet-corn milling/alcohol process."

It would seem that the case has been made for the production of ethanol from farm products. Questions remain. What products are most effective? What kind of fermentation plants should be used? How much alcohol can be produced? And how soon?

Answering the last questions first, it is fairly clear that President Carter's call for the production of 500 million gallons of alcohol during 1981 is a goal that can not only be met but exceeded. Andreas announced that present expansion of A.D.M.'s plant would allow his firm alone to meet the President's goal more than halfway by producing 260 million gallons of ethanol a year. This large A.D.M. production, however, represents only a fraction of the alcohol fuel now being produced by other distilleries and on American farms.

Throughout the Middle West, many individual farmers have installed solar stills, using the sun's energy and enzymes in the distilling process. Witnesses at the alcohol commission hearings pointed out that it is not necessary to produce 200-proof alcohol on such farms if a complete switchover is made to alcohol as a fuel. Then ethanol containing as much as 10 or 20 percent water works very efficiently.

There is general agreement that ethanol production should be widely diversified. Huge multibillion-dollar plants like those needed for coal gasification are unnecessary. Instead, small distilleries should be located close to communities where particular source products are readily available, whether those products are grain or wood or cheese whey or garbage from towns or cities. Hayes described a portable alcohol still demonstrated at the Bio-Energy '80 World Congress in Atlanta. The unit cost only $6,000, he said, and was "capable of grinding the grain, making mash, fermentation and distillation." With mass production, he estimated that such units could be produced even more cheaply.

Dr. George Emert, who spent more than three years researching ethanol production for the Gulf Oil Corporation, is one of the experts who believes that such distillery dispersal is essential to taking full advantage of whatever raw materials may be available in a specific area. Emert, using an old distillery, perfected and tested a system that can use *any* basic material—whether farm crops, wood waste or municipal garbage. His system would produce ethanol, not methanol, without any costly secondary refining of methanol to remove its impurities.

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Gulf Oil abandoned Emert's project when it had reached the stage of pilot-plant production, but it did donate his research and patents to the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. The Department of Energy has tentatively approved a $1 million grant that would help finance a 50-ton-per-day plant at Pine Bluff, Arkansas, using Emert's system. Provided the D.O.E. cash comes through on schedule, Emert hopes to have the plant in operation by the end of 1981, producing 1.2 million gallons of alcohol a year.

Questions remain: How much of the 100 billion gallons of gasoline we currently use can be replaced by alcohol? And how soon?

John Schnittker, president of Schnittker Associates, consulting experts, told the Alcohol Fuels Commission that more than 1 billion gallons of ethanol could be produced yearly by 1985. He made it clear that this was what he considered a conservative, "base line" figure. With OPEC steadily raising the price of crude oil, he anticipated that demand for ethanol would increase and that its cost (now roughly equivalent to that of imported oil) would reach an even more favorable level. In such circumstances, he considered the production of some 2 billion to 4 billion gallons by 1985 a distinct possibility.

A great deal depends, of course, upon Federal choices and the direction of the synfuels program. The Carter Administration appears, to alternative-energy advocates at least, to have committed itself to as wrongheaded a course as possible in its emphasis on using oil shale and coal oil gasification to produce methanol.

This trend has led Barry Commoner to call for the complete restructuring of the American agricultural system and a complete change of direction by the Administration. Commoner's script entails the use of every available product—grain, wood cellulose and wastes of all kind—to produce ethanol in vast quantities. He estimates that if the United States uses all its available resources, it could produce 150 billion gallons of ethanol a year, half again as much as our present consumption of gasoline. Such a goal can be achieved, he conceded, only through radical changes in the American agricultural system, but even without such changes, he argued, it would still be possible to produce 50 billion gallons of ethanol a year, about half of our gasoline consumption. All of this can be accomplished, he asserted, without endangering food or feed production.

Commoner emphasized that the history of American agriculture demonstrates that our farmers are highly flexible and accomplish changes in crop patterns with amazing rapidity. He has pointed out that there are crops like sugar beets and sweet sorghum grass (the latter a product that can be grown on otherwise unproductive land) that yield more alcohol than corn does. By adopting an "alternative crop system, based on corn/sugar beet/forage rotation and the expansion of crop land by 10 percent," we could, he says, maintain food production, produce billions of gallons of alcohol and avoid erosion of the land.

But Commoner has also made it clear that any total switch to alcohol fuels, which could free us from the price piracy of OPEC, depends on the kind of strong Federal direction that does not seem to be forthcoming. It would require, for one thing, the cancellation of the multibillion-dollar investment in coal gasification and oil shale. In addition, the Government should compel auto makers to produce cars capable of operating on 100 percent alcohol by 1990—and, before that, to manufacture engines capable of running "on a wide range of alcohol-gasoline mixtures." (Brazilian cars have been running for years on a 20 percent alcohol blend.)

Commoner's final call was for a Federal program that would use now-defunct automobile plants to make alcohol stills suitable for on-farm or farmer cooperatives' use. After hearing his testimony, Senator Birch Bayh of Indiana, chairman of the National Alcohol Fuels Commission, remarked acidly that it's about time "American auto makers produced cars capable of running on alcohol—not in Brazil, but here in the United States."

But this is a point that hasn't yet registered with the Carter Administration. □

THE ORGANIZED 'BAR'

How the Lawyers' Monopoly Blocks Legal Insurance

PHILIP M. STERN

The high cost of legal help, which puts lawyers out of reach of most Americans, is due, in considerable degree, to the relentless opposition of the lawyers' monopoly—the Organized Bar—to any innovations in the delivery of legal services that would result in lower fees. The most determined resistance has been to legal clinics and group-insurance plans—especially the latter, which offer the greatest savings of all.

Consider: Legal clinics have brought about a singular advance by handling divorces for $125 (rather than $500 to $750), simple wills for $45 (instead of $200 and over) and personal bankruptcies for $375 (about half the old going rate). But what about a package offering the divorce plus the will plus the bankruptcy—all for $26 a year? That package is not a pipe dream. In New York City, 80,000 members of the Municipal Employees Union (District Council 37) each contributed $26 a year (prior to 1979, when the amount became an employer-provided fringe benefit) to a common pool, so as to hire enough full-time staff at-

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torneys to handle virtually all the legal problems not just of the union members but of their immediate families as well. (The number covered has grown to 93,000 members and 26,000 retirees and their families and the per-capita contribution is now $29 a year.)

The District Council 37 plan has another advantage over the legal clinic. In 1979, I took to the oldest legal clinic, Jacoby & Meyers, a friend's problem that seemed insoluble without bringing a lawsuit—a "lemon" car the dealer refused to exchange—and was told that they could handle the case only by charging so much per hour for whatever lawyer's time went into the suit and therefore couldn't quote me a flat fee as they do for divorces and other standard legal tasks. Well, Nancy Katz, a District Council 37 member, had precisely that problem (with a Buick whose faulty brakes caused it to swerve into oncoming traffic, despite repeated efforts to repair it). In her case, one of the union's staff attorneys did initiate a lawsuit and did pursue it to a happy conclusion, even when the dealer brought in General Motors and its high-priced lawyers. It was all done as part of the $26-a-year dues.

That case alone ended up consuming twenty hours of attorney's time—the fee for which Katz could never have afforded had she been acting alone. She would have had to forget any thought of a lawsuit, live with the dangerous lemon car and swallow the injustice.

But Katz wasn't alone. She had, in effect, 80,000 allies, each contributing $26 a year. In 1978, their contributions made it possible for her to bring her lawsuit and avert an injustice. In another year, her $26 would help solve her neighbor's legal problem, and so forth—the modern legal equivalent, in a sense, of an old-fashioned barn-raising. (As an employer-paid fringe benefit the idea remains the same.)

There's more than cost saving involved here. There's a vital principle: groups of people banding together to buy their legal help and sharing (or spreading) the risks. It's hardly a new principle: it's at the heart of any insurance plan—group medical plans, for instance. Yet the Organized Bar has stubbornly resisted them. In consequence, at the end of the 1970s, there were only a few District Council 37-type plans in the nation.

The bar's chief weapon for shooting down group legal plans has been the exercise of its special power to write the rules that forbid lawyers to take part in group plans. As far back as the 1920s, when the automobile was coming into vogue and burgeoning auto clubs offered members free legal help with driving-related offenses, the American Bar Association declared it "unethical" for attorneys to participate in any such arrangement. The matter remained largely dormant until the 1960s, when the bar felt strongly enough to take the issue to the U.S. Supreme Court on four separate occasions, unfazed by being slapped down each time. In the early 1960s, the Virginia Bar Association sought, on "ethical" grounds, to prevent the N.A.A.C.P. from hiring lawyers to defend the civil rights of individual black Virginia citizens and then, a year later, sought to prohibit unions not only from hiring but even *recommending* lawyers to its members to help with their workmen's compensation claims. But the Supreme Court flatly declared that group protection of individual rights "cannot be condemned as a threat to legal ethics."

If the Court was trying to speak to the bar, the bar was evidently not listening, for in 1967 it was back on the firing line. The arrangement that aroused the ire of the Illinois Bar Association was the United Mine Workers Union paying a $12,000 annual retainer to an attorney who spent a fraction of his time (in addition to being a state senator, he had an active private practice of his own) helping union members file work-injury claims. In a three-year period, he succeeded in winning benefits of more than $3 million for injured miners who, if they had individually hired private attorneys, would have had to pay legal fees of $500,000 to $1 million. As it was, the total three-year legal cost, paid by the union, came to $36,000.

In objecting to this, the bar maintained it was only looking out for the miners' interests (protecting them from a lawyer who owed his allegiance to the union rather than to individual members). Significantly, though, there was no complaint from the workers. Once again the Court repudiated the bar.

Still the bar persisted, bringing yet another case to the Court in 1971—the fourth time in eight years it had raised the same basic issue in slightly varying forms. Law professor Prebe Stolz, commenting on that decision in an A.B.A. publication, *Unauthorized Practice News*, noted the Court's "rather impatient tone" and observed, "Evidently the Court is getting weary of telling the Bar something it should have understood long ago."

Did the American Bar Association respond to these four Court rebuffs by "giving up and leading in the search for new ways to deliver legal services," asked New York University law professor Stephen Gillers. "Absolutely not." This battle, he said, concerned something far more important to the bar than professional obligations. "It concern[ed] money."

The bar's old guard carried on its opposition, with new rules designed to prevent lawyers from taking part in group legal plans the bar found unpalatable. (How would anyone feel if the American Medical Association barred a doctor from taking part in a health insurance program?)

The crucial new dividing line for the bar was between so-called open-panel plans—open, that is, to any lawyer wishing to participate—and closed-panel plans, confined to attorneys chosen by the sponsoring organization (the labor union or credit union). Experience in the medical field has shown how pivotal that distinction can be. With closed plans, the sponsoring group can attach conditions as to fees charged or, better still, it can hire its own salaried doctors (as District Council 37 did with lawyers)—achieving cost controls that aren't possible in plans open to all physicians. The result is that closed-panel prepaid medical costs are markedly less than those of open-panel fee-for-service plans. One authoritative comparison found the former 29 percent less costly than a commercial medical insurance plan and 46 percent less costly than Blue Cross.

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The medical model's potential for cutting professional fees was not lost on bar leaders, and in 1974, when the issue came before the American Bar Association meeting in Houston, the A.B.A. adopted a new "ethical" rule making it far more difficult for lawyers to participate in closed plans than in open plans. But was this a question of ethics or of profits? Insurance executive William Pugh Jr., whose company wanted to test the group legal plan market, was skeptical. First, he noted, the ethical objections to closed-panel plans did not emanate from the A.B.A.'s Ethics Committee (indeed, that body recommended a rule treating open and closed plans identically) but from the A.B.A.'s General Practice Section—the very attorneys who, Pugh said, "by and large would be affected adversely" by the rise of group-practice plans. Pugh also found it noteworthy that the A.B.A. had never raised any ethical objections to the closed-panel plans under which insurance companies had routinely funneled profitable business to A.B.A. members (this was done under arrangements giving the insurance company, rather than the insured, the power to choose counsel). Finally, Pugh noted that under the new Houston rule, closed-panel plans the bar found ethically objectionable when marketed by insurance companies suddenly became acceptable when controlled by local bar associations.

Other critics have observed that while protesting closed-panel plans because they deny a free choice of lawyers, the A.B.A. seems to find them acceptable for the poor. After all, the Legal Services program (which the A.B.A. warmly endorses) is a rigidly closed panel arrangement: the poor must take the Legal Services lawyer offered them or do without.

The Houston rule stirred widespread protest, and the A.B.A. meeting in Chicago six months later softened the rule a bit. But it remains a dampener rather than an encourager to lawyers interested in group-practice arrangements. For example, the Chicago rule begins with the dissuasive words "A lawyer shall *not*"—participate in any group plan that fails to meet a long list of detailed A.B.A. requirements. The implication: attorneys venturing into this uncharted field do so at their own risk, and if a bar association should deem their particular plan out of bounds, they stand to be disciplined.

If the District Council 37 plan could in the late 1970s apply the risk-spreading insurance principle so as to produce broad-scale legal help for $26 a year merely by drawing on 80,000 members of one union in a single city, think of the benefits that could flow if legal insurance plans could draw on a *nationwide* market such as, say, all members of the steelworkers or auto workers union, or even all BankAmericard holders. Such broad-scale group plans might be marketed by major national insurance companies or, alternatively, they might be marketed and operated through a nationwide network of franchised law offices, operating in the manner of H & R Block.

But operations of that magnitude require considerable start-up capital, and a combination of restrictive state insurance laws plus confining bar association rules have created a Catch-22 situation: those with the necessary capital are by and large forbidden to engage in the practice of law; and those able to practice law are cut off from the sources of needed capital because bar rules preclude infusions of capital by corporations as well as by laymen with business, marketing and advertising skills that most lawyers lack. Moreover, insurance companies, which have both the capital and the sales forces to market widespread group legal plans, often find themselves stymied by state laws, enacted at the instance of bar groups, forbidding them to market cost-efficient closed-panel plans.

In 1977, a decade after the U.S. Supreme Court's pivotal upholding of group legal plans in the United Mine Workers case, lawyer-author Jethro Lieberman, the legal affairs writer for *Business Week* magazine, wrote that the Court's 1967 ruling in that case should have set the stage for a "radical reorganization of the delivery of legal services in the United States"—that is, for a vast expansion of the group legal plans of the sort upheld by the Court. Congress had done its part to make such a revolution possible, passing three separate laws to facilitate such plans. Yet, Lieberman found, a decade after the mine workers decision, the reorganization had barely begun—a "tribute," he felt, to "the Bar's ethical insensibilities." □

Brzezinski

(Continued From Front Cover)

Brzezinski has been made by William Sullivan, Carter's Ambassador to Iran during the last month of the Shah's rule. Writing in the current issue of *Foreign Policy*, Sullivan, himself a hard-liner with impeccable counterinsurgency credentials (Indochina, 1964-73; Philippines, 1973-77), discloses that Brzezinski undercut American efforts, which had the backing of the Secretary of State, to begin overtures to the Ayatollah Khomeini. Brzezinski's brazen back-door advocacy of a generals' coup at a time when the entire Iranian nation, including a substantial majority of the military itself, was firmly committed to Khomeini's revolution was mindless and execrably timed. At a minimum, Sullivan supplied enough hard evidence to give Jimmy Carter cause to wonder if he currently employs the best possible national security adviser.

Brzezinski is even more ideologically mercurial than the spectacularly successful Kissinger. Brzezinski and Kissinger represent the triumph of that new breed of full-time experts who have managed to eclipse the Wall Street amateurs, usually lawyers, who had formerly held sway over U.S. foreign policy. At the same time, the Kissinger-Brzezinski ascendancy marks no break with the tradition that the shap-

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ing of foreign policy is a matter of catering to the current tastes of the bipartisan American ruling class.

A central theme of Brzezinski's early days in the White House was his absolute need to distinguish himself in every feasible way from Kissinger without allowing his role as national security adviser to be overshadowed by some pinstriped upstart in the State Department. This imperative forced Brzezinski to stay initially somewhat in the background, especially to make good on Carter's campaign promise that he would not allow any Kissingers to undercut the foreign policy establishment. As a result, Brzezinski made himself into the figure whose influence over foreign policy arose from his role as the sideline coach of the President, rather than as the grandstanding superstar. This role was recorded once by an errant TV camera, which caught a confident Brzezinski giving a reassuring gesture to an uncertain Carter as he left the West Wing of the White House after a press conference.

To avoid the impression that he was a mere mini-Kissinger, Brzezinski at first emphasized the moral content of foreign policy. This emphasis also corresponded with the post-Vietnam, post-Watergate mood of disillusionment of the American people and with Carter's own evangelical moralism. Human-rights diplomacy was the centerpiece of Carter's early foreign policy, and this served perfectly to give Brzezinski's influence a different tone and quality than Kissinger's surly geopolitical amoralism. Before long it became clear that the advocacy of human rights was no way to safeguard the structure of American imperial interests abroad. As the popular mood drifted right, Brzezinski was ready to ride the cresting political wave with calls for an enhanced defense effort. In short, Brzezinski's artful dodging has involved publicly avoiding the Kissinger image while embracing the essentials of the Kissinger world view privately.

Given the complex situation of this early period, as well as a popular and competent Secretary of State who was, in contrast, at ease with a moderate foreign policy, it is no wonder that Brzezinski was outwardly gleeful about scoring so high in the *U.S. News and World Report* survey of April 1980 on "Who Runs America." Brzezinski easily outpolled Cyrus Vance, finishing third behind only Carter and Paul Volcker. Vance placed ninth. Since then, of course, Vance has resigned, on principle, to protest failed policies that had had Brzezinski's enthusiastic backing, particularly the Iran hostage rescue fiasco. Brzezinski's talents as bureaucratic infighter and diviner of domestic pressures were amply confirmed by his outlasting Vance, despite having by far the worst of the foreign policy argument.

The handling of the new nuclear weapons policy—Presidential Directive 59—is quintessential Brzezinski. With Ronald Reagan bearing down hard on defense policy and enjoying a big lead in the polls, Brzezinski pushed for a quick release of a shift in nuclear doctrine that had been in the works for several years and could have been downplayed. The flamboyance of the disclosure could only have been motivated by the desire to steal the nuclear-weapons issue from the hard-charging Republicans. No matter that it had unsettling effects abroad, has probably strengthened the Kremlin hawks, or made a nuclear showdown more likely in coming years. Also, to have shut Edmund Muskie out of the decision-making process on a matter of such gravity was to put Brzezinski's latest rival on notice as to who was in charge. Perhaps the notice was too crude, since Brzezinski has had to backpeddle some to avoid giving the impression that he is out to destroy the popular Muskie. Perhaps Brzezinski's earlier triumphs in the bureaucracy had made him temporarily complacent about the subtleties of the rulers' code. Despite his present stature, Brzezinski will not last if he flouts too often Washington's minimal strictures against public knifing.

His talents for bureaucratic infighting aside, it is hard to pin down what Brzezinski actually stands for. He has none of Kissinger's dogged espousal of nineteenth-century geopolitics or his preoccupation with alliances, balances and diplomatic negotiation. Brzezinski is more a man of the hour, any hour. He has a marvelous ahistorical capacity to free himself from yesterday's embarrassing failure by shifting his sights totally to the current situation. He always seems to know exactly what to propose for now. He compulsively looks ahead as a way of refusing to look back on his own past foolishness. In a sophisticated way, his outlook is one of mindless optimism, ultimately counting on new technology to bail the country out, as well as to redeem his own reputation.

A decade ago he published a trendy account of the future under the title *Between Two Ages: America's Role in the Technetronic Age*, in which he argued that American technology, disseminated by multinational corporations and financial institutions, would steer us benignly into a new age—not an unwelcome message for the foreign policy establishment. To make this happen, Brzezinski advocated blurring the distinction between the public and private spheres, by which he meant between government and industry. A few years before going to Washington, Brzezinski actually proposed reforming diplomacy by making it "operationally similar to the more efficient international corporation," specifically by increasing reliance on "computers and sound-and-sight electronic communication." Brzezinski added, "Washington's policy-making process needs to be similarly streamlined and freed from its tangle of bureaucratic red tape." Incredible as it may seem, Brzezinski seeks to reverse the liberal tendency to use the public sphere to remold corporate operations in the private sphere along ethical and democratically accountable lines. Brzezinski's prescription is to reform government by making it operate like a multinational corporation.

These proposals for bureaucratic reform are as close as Brzezinski ever comes to principled positions. In numerous writings, Brzezinski indicts the Soviet Union for its bureaucratic inefficiency and rigidity, far more than for its cruelty. Elsewhere, in collaboration with Samuel Huntington, Brzezinski once even wrote, undoubtedly to his current embarrassment, at interminable length about the "convergence" of the Soviet Union and the United States as two

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bureaucratically top-heavy superstates. The only positive alternative to this Orwellian destiny that Brzezinski entertains is a world system dominated by corporate efficiency.

Of course, Brzezinski's professional competence is largely based on his stature as a Soviet specialist. In that role, he had a deserved reputation of being a hard-liner among hard-liners. Some attribute his vestigial anti-Soviet fervor to his aristocratic upbringing in Poland, which he fled as a boy. In any event, his anti-Soviet, anti-Communist credentials are impeccable. Nevertheless, what is felicitously called his "sense of timing" and "flexibility" have allowed him to roll with the geopolitical punches and, in the early Carter period, even to go along with the continuation of détente. But it was clear all along to knowledgeable observers that Brzezinski's heart was not in it.

It took the fall of the Shah of Iran and the Soviet march into Afghanistan to put the real Brzezinski on display, namely, the militarist cold-war revivalist, champion of beleaguered tyrants and implacable foe of progressive politics at home and abroad. No prominent academic, it should be remembered, was more stridently counterrevolutionary during the ferment of the 1960s than Brzezinski. In a widely publicized speech to media leaders in 1967, Brzezinski attacked the left in the United States for its anachronistic embrace of ideas "completely irrelevant to the new dilemmas of our society." This was also the time when Brzezinski was everywhere defending the essential correctness of the American involvement in Vietnam, an outlook he quietly and expeditiously scuttled some years later without ever pausing to explain how his later views squared with the earlier one. Indeed, Brzezinski rarely pauses to explain. It is Brzezinski's art to be an exceedingly nimble performer on the high wires of international diplomacy and bureaucratic politics. His combative habits include attributing his own vices to his principal rival. Hence, in the early 1970s, Kissinger was derided by Brzezinski as an acrobat when U.S. foreign policy required an architect. In truth, Kissinger *was* the architect, although his style was to erect grandiose structures on inadequate foundations—showy but likely to collapse (e.g., the Vietnam negotiations). It is Brzezinski who is the acrobat, always ready to recover his balance by shifting his ideas.

At various times Brzezinski has been an articulate advocate of human-rights diplomacy and of meeting halfway the challenge of the Third World. Such positions, always clearly stated, are part rhetoric, part the result of a careful assessment of what is currently going on in the world and part what he perceives to be the political outlook of his power-wielding mentor. Shortly before he went to Washington, Brzezinski was capable of writing in *Foreign Affairs*, "Nothing could be more destructive than for the United States to position itself as the ultimate shield of the remnants of white supremacy in Africa at a time when racial equality is coming to be accepted as an imperative norm." Since being at Carter's side, Brzezinski has often noted the powerful forces of change at work in the non-Western world. "The world is inexorably changing under the influence of forces no government can wholly control," he wrote in the Spring 1979 *Atlantic Community Quarterly*. Hence, it is important for the United States to "meet the legitimate hopes of people for peace, prosperity, justice, and liberty."

Yet, in a crunch, Brzezinski always mans the reactionary side of the barricade. That is why, in the last days of the Shah, who by then was confronted by a movement embracing virtually the whole of Iranian society, Brzezinski was still feverishly plotting in the White House for a last-minute generals' coup in Teheran. We need not endorse what has gone on in Iran since the fall of the Shah to know that the effort to smash the Iranian revolution at its moment of virtual victory would, at best, have occasioned a blood bath of vast proportions, as well as confirmed the United States in its role as chief enemy of Third World aspirations. To advocate repeatedly such a counterrevolutionary course at the moment of concrete choice and to speak convincingly about "the political awakening of mankind and resulting redistribution of power worldwide as the overriding reality of our time" exhibits Brzezinski's dangerous incoherence. Somehow, Brzezinski grasps the potency of the political awakening in the Third World, even the futility of resisting its consequences. Yet his political identity is shaped by imperial concerns and outlook. Since the United States is committed to upholding the status quo virtually everywhere outside the Communist orbit, Brzezinski seems always ready to do battle with the forces of change.

Take the Middle East. He now talks of the region as a

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third strategic zone, the other two being Western Europe and the Far East. Within these zones vital interests of the United States are at stake. It is necessary to develop the military capability and will to defend the status quo, though not just against the Soviet Union. If revolutionary nationalism asserts claims in this region, whether on behalf of Palestinian or Saudi Arabian self-determination, Brzezinski stands ready with doctrine, weaponry and justification to advocate military intervention. His stature within the bureaucracy has also been raised by the apparent vindication of his view of Soviet behavior in Afghanistan over the past few months. He joins with those warmongers who want to rid U.S. foreign policy of the inhibitions of the so-called "Vietnam syndrome."

Recall that earlier, Brzezinski had been calling for closer collaboration among the non-Communist advanced industrial countries. This idea inspired David Rockefeller to launch the infamous Trilateral Commission with, as we all know, Brzezinski as its executive director and principal guru. The Trilateral idea is an excellent example of Brzezinski's eerie talent for anticipating the ideas of the ruling elite. For years, various leaders of finance and industry had felt that the Government in Washington was too enmeshed in national concerns like full employment and social welfare and was ignoring the really important business of safeguarding overseas markets and resources and upholding the value of the dollar. Furthermore, these powerful figures in the business world were alarmed by the solidarity of the Third World and the solidity of the Soviet bloc, in contrast to the disarray of the Western alliance. It was Brzezinski who responded to this malaise with an article in *Foreign Affairs* setting forth a proposal for Trilateralist collaboration that galvanized David Rockefeller and friends.

Similarly, it was Brzezinski who packaged, for the Trilateral managerial world, the idea of co-opting the rich Third World countries with the phrase "regional influential." And, indeed, on Carter's sole major world tour back in late 1977, his only Third World stopovers were in countries that qualified as regional influentials —Venezuela, Brazil, Nigeria, India and Iran. And it was Brzezinski who, in his catalyzing role as leader of the Trilateral Commission, understood that one of the problems facing the Western democracies was their very democracy, euphemistically labeled "governability" in Trilateralist jargon. In a notorious study, *The Crisis of Democracy*, the commission put forth the view that the future of capitalism was jeopardized by the unruly and unreasonable demands of the citizenry in these countries.

As Carter's re-election became the top priority in the White House midway through the term, Brzezinski's star began to rise dramatically. Carter's domestic programs were a failure, especially among vital portions of his own constituency such as labor and minorities. His re-election, and earlier even his renomination, depended on gaining the upper hand in foreign policy and seeming tough enough to arrest America's imperial decline, yet not trigger-happy.

Mobilizing popular support for an activist foreign policy required something more than the menace of Third World revolutionaries. It required, in its essence, a reborn Soviet threat. Brzezinski sized up the situation perfectly. He began by purveying the idiotic claims of Soviet military superiority; he backed new weapons systems, called for a greater defense effort and more aggressive doctrines on nuclear weapons use. Then, in the late summer of 1979, Brzezinski led the Carter effort to create an international crisis around "the discovery" of a Soviet training brigade in Cuba that had been there for seventeen years. The American people never warmed to the issue, but the Cuban incident revealed unmistakably Carter's willingness to give an anti-Soviet twist to U.S. foreign policy in pursuit of his re-election, and it was a prelude to the excessive reaction to the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan.

Afghanistan was a genuine issue, of course. Any superpower use of armed force to put down national struggles in foreign societies is deplorable and worthy of condemnation. Yet what Brzezinski counseled Carter to do was to treat the Soviet move into Afghanistan as a challenge directed at the West's most vital nexus of interests—the Middle East—and thereby to raise fears of a general war. Indeed, the Carter Doctrine proclaimed a readiness to fight World War III to defend the Persian Gulf against an external aggressor, even though, as the Europeans understood so well, the only plausible threat to Western interests in the region was the kind of internal turbulence that produced the Iranian revolution. In essence, Carter, along with the jingoist Republican leadership, has been prepared to raise world tensions, risk nuclear war, imperil the position of the West in the Middle East to distract the electorate from the Government's failure to provide jobs, social services, a viable energy policy and a brake on inflation. Brzezinski seems clearly the mastermind, or at the very minimum an enthusiastic accomplice, of this reckless shift in course for Carter midway through his first term.

The deepest dilemma for the Kissingers and Brzezinskis in Washington is how to satisfy their cravings for historical stature without abandoning their role as servants of the very ruling class that conferred upon them their legitimacy. Given the flow of history adverse to the United States position in the world—what Brzezinski himself acknowledges as the global political awakening—and given the refusal of the American upper classes to endorse a substantial redistribution of economic, cultural and political power in the world, only one path remains open to Brzezinski, namely, that of militarism. Such a course seems also, happily for Brzezinski, closely connected with Carter's re-election prospects, as well as with the logic of his second-term Presidency.

We need no crystal ball, then, to anticipate that Brzezinski will choose a militarist path in the years ahead, particularly if Carter lacks the autonomy and legitimacy to govern on behalf of the nation as a whole. He has been too well "groomed" by the Trilateralists ever to embark upon a more populist path that might reflect the interests of the American people as a whole. The Brzezinski way is not a happy one, considering the weaponry and turmoil on the horizon, especially in his third strategic zone. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Types Defamiliarized

GEORGE STADE

LOON LAKE. *By E. L. Doctorow. Random House. 258 pp. $11.95.*

Literary conventions are not accidents, after all. Neither, however, are they willed. They come into existence because writers borrow from one another. A writer borrows something that works, either for him or on an audience. A literary convention, then, is something that a lot of writers have borrowed from one another, something that works or has worked for a lot of people.

Just how a convention works is not clear, but in one way or another it must answer to the specific emotional and notional needs of the group for which it works. These needs, over a period of time, press the convention into a durable shape, just as the needs are shaped by the group's social and material circumstances. A literary convention, it follows, is a template of a group's sentiments and an index of its situation. Our own conventions of plot, character, scene, incident and style are the way they are because that's the way we like them, and maybe need them, but not because we consciously chose them. There's a cunning to literary history, as to the other kind.

Naïve and earnest writers, who go in for naked selves and raw truths, are victims of conventions they don't recognize; as artists, they are like those chimpanzee painters whose work Clement Greenberg found derivative. Hack writers merely place conventions next to each other in familiar sequences, as a man might spell out his mother's name with his bottle cap collection. Thus, many romances, westerns and whodunits are written by committee, one member of which may specialize in clinches, another in showdowns, a third in comic rectors. The immense popularity of such formula fiction shows how much emotional juice is left in the most desiccated of conventions.

George Stade teaches English at Columbia University and is the author of Confessions of a Lady-Killer *(W. W. Norton), a novel.*

Clever writers are like magicians: they give old tricks new twists, while a witty patter diverts you from the false bottoms and hidden strings. You know what to expect, but it happens unexpectedly, as in the most satisfying thrillers and horror stories. Avant-garde writers counter conventions with anti-conventions, the most tedious kind there is. But ambitious writers try to work through conventions to the ideas and emotions that gave rise to them.

Which brings us to E. L. Doctorow. His first novel was a western (of sorts), and his best known is *Ragtime*; both books play variations on old American themes. The distance between the variations and the themes gives us a perspective from which we can see around the themes to the group sentiments that shaped them. So it is with Doctorow's new novel, which is populated with familiar types defamiliarized.

The title, *Loon Lake*, is also the name of an opulent Adirondack resort—guarded by packs of dogs gone wild because "the people who own them . . . can't feed them anymore" (the novel is set during the Depression)—a radiant center of the American lunacy that spreads everywhere. It is owned by F. W. Bennett, an industrial tycoon of the robber-baron variety, vicious in the usual ways, but sporadically likable, even touching. His wife, Lucinda, is a famous, ironical, frigid, doomed aviatrix. Her takeoffs and touchdowns reflect the book's central image: that of a loon diving into the cold, dark, obliterating water, and then struggling up and out, fish in beak, emitting loony cries.

Bennett's business associate, Tommy Crapo—gangster, flashy dresser, strikebreaker, head of Crapo Industrial Services—visits Loon Lake with a number of friends, among them Clara, his moll, a beautiful and brassy blonde. Crapo makes a present of Clara to Bennett, who leaves her to Warren Penfield, the fat, fumbling, failed "poet in residence" who narrates much of the action in blankish verse. Clara makes her escape from Loon Lake with Joe "of Paterson," as he ironically refers to himself, the hero of this novel, "a picaresque of other men's money and other men's wives."

Joe, like other picaros, has left home, left his impoverished and otherwise inadequate parents, to try his luck on the road. He has worked at odd jobs, slept with older women, toured hobo camps, worked as a carny roustabout and followed a glimpse of Clara through the window of a richly furnished railway car to Loon Lake. When he flees with Clara his destination is California, the destination of many of this novel's characters, none of whom get there. Instead, Joe settles down to work on an assembly line in a cold and depressed company town; both the company and the town, as it turns out, are pretty much owned by F. W. Bennett.

On his way to this interlude of a chastened and wage-earning domesticity with Clara, Joe has come through many variations of the stock scenes and characters of road and Depression fiction. There are bindlestiffs and meaty cops, faded wives and brutalized husbands, itinerant Marxists, coal-mine cave-ins, comradely strikers and goons with bad consciences, lecherous matrons, snooty servants, overloaded tin lizzies heading west, murderous rubes and an amorous fat lady who is ultimately a victim of the violence that is as pervasive as the harsh and haunted American landscape. Doctorow's treatment of these scenes and characters is at once traditional, odd and dissonantly beautiful, like a chorus of the blues played by Dizzy Gillespie.

Finally Joe, stripped of everything ("I am dispossessed"), struggles back to Loon Lake, revenge on his mind, among other things ("no simple motive could fill the totality of my return"), convinced that Bennett is the direct or distant cause of all his dispossessions, and not only his. But Bennett is no longer so prepossessing: he is declining into a terminal funk of grief and guilt over the death of his wife. Joe's revenge is implausible in summary, but not in context. He decides to save Bennett from wasting away, to get at the human behind the tycoon, to make Bennett love him, to become his son.

The last paragraph of the book, written in a kind of semilyric computerese, outlines the rest of Joseph Paterson Bennett's career—as soldier, as deputy assistant director of Central Intelligence, as chairman of this and trustee

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of that, as tycoon and, in the book's powerful concluding words, as "Master of Loon Lake." What could be more conventional, more American, than this success story, long ago perfected in its naïve form by Horatio Alger? Except that Joe's material success is a moral failure, to put it mildly. But there is more to it than that.

In this same last paragraph we learn for the first time that Joe's real surname is Korzeniowski, which was also the real surname of the dispossessed Polish writer Joseph Conrad—and thereby hangs a moral or two. Like Conrad's major fictions, *Loon Lake* is narrated discontinuously, through various styles and voices, and in a shuffled chronology. But in Conrad's major novels—*Lord Jim*, *Nostromo*, *The Secret Agent* and *Victory*—and in a number of his minor ones, the real or adoptive father undoes his son, as Doramin kills Jim, as old Viola kills Nostromo, as Verloc kills Stevie, as Heyst is undone by his father's skeptical philosophy. Conrad's point, roughly, is that the past destroys the present.

In *Loon Lake*, Joe of Paterson (or Father-Son) triumphs over his adoptive father by becoming him, only worse—as it is worse to be a deputy assistant director of the C.I.A. than a mere tycoon. It is not a matter of co-option, as young men in Joe's position often complain, but of revenge through usurpation. In America, to generalize further, the sons win; they destroy the past only to preserve the worst of it in themselves, and thereby destroy the future. Such is Doctorow's variation on the conventional American success story.

Loon Lake is not as elegantly formed as *Ragtime*, the standard according to which any new novel by Doctorow is bound to be judged, but it is even more ambitious, particularly in its mixture of styles and in its reach for significance. Doctorow's social conscience sometimes makes him predictable, if not ponderous, as in scenes depicting the suffering of workers in this novel (and in the scenes in *Ragtime* depicting Coalhouse Walker's occupation of the Pierpont Morgan Library). And the stylistic variations sometimes seem footling, as in certain of Joe's run-on musings, which add nothing to the "Camera Eye" sections of Dos Passos's *U.S.A.*, from which they derive.

For all that, *Loon Lake* has something throughout it that is only here and there in his four earlier novels. Beyond the assured characterizations, the adroit prose, the vivid scenes, the pointed variations on American themes, there is something still more valuable: a tone, a mood, an atmosphere, a texture, a poetry, a felt and meditated vision of how things go with us. It is more useful to a writer of fiction than a social conscience. □

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Distant Landscapes

EARL ROVIT

FIFTY STORIES. *By Kay Boyle. Doubleday & Company. 648 pp. $15.95.*

This selection of Kay Boyle's short fiction spans almost forty years of work and is itself only the sparest sampling of her total literary production—thirteen novels, eight collections of short stories, five volumes of poetry, assorted memoirs, children's books and translations. The reviewer is in the awkward position of someone who is showing a visitor the local Carnegie Free Library or the Water Works—that is, some distinguished and vaguely ancient architectural landmark that has served the community with unobtrusive integrity for three or four generations. One feels embarrassment because it is so easy to advance grandiose claims that are patently absurd; and yet, there is clearly an achievement here that ought to be recorded with a proper warmth.

One of the youngest certified members of the Lost Generation and a consistently antifascist voice in the 1930s, Boyle maintained her rebellious and determined idealism after the war, becoming associated with the various freedom movements in the 1960s and 1970s in the San Francisco area. Yet, except for a few frequently anthologized short stories ("The White Horses of Vienna") and perhaps the novel *Avalanche* (1944), she has been relatively uncelebrated, especially when compared to some of her near contemporaries like Christina Stead and Anaïs Nin.

Born in St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1903, Boyle may be one of those artists who suffers from the quirky fate of falling between generations. A good ten or fifteen years younger than the Millay-Wylie-Katherine Anne Porter generation, she is also somewhat older than writers like Eudora Welty, Lillian Hellman, Mary McCarthy and Jean Stafford—the first modern wave of female writers, I think, who were able to take advantage of the relative professional security gained by that earlier pioneering group. Boyle arrived in Paris in the hectic middle of the 1920s and remained in Europe for the next thirty years, marrying three times and bearing six children. She was an active collaborator in the avant-garde publishing ventures of Eugene Jolas, Robert McAlmon and Harry and Caresse Crosby; she lived for a time at the Paris commune of Raymond Duncan, and her second marriage to Laurence Vail, the ex-husband of Peggy Guggenheim, placed her at the very center of American expatriate life—a life that gradually changed from bohemian rebellion to stunned social despair as the shadows of the impending war grew denser and more implacable over Europe.

I stress her cosmopolitan biography because the techniques of Boyle's fic-

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tion have always been grounded in a realism of place and topicality. Accordingly, a proper measure of her accomplishment—as a writer, professional woman and advocate of social justice—will necessarily reflect Boyle's day-to-day experiences as a marginal observer of a life which she never quite shares. Most typically in her stories, she presents herself as a vitally interested witness. The events that seize her sympathies tend to be those in which social determinations collide with human hopes, rendering the latter poignant in their twisted impotence. To some extent, the breadth of topicality which her stories reflect can be seen in the format of this collection: Early Group, 1927-34; Austrian Group, 1933-38; English Group, 1935-36; French Group, 1939-66; Military Occupation Group, 1945-50; American Group, 1942-66.

As the headings suggest, Boyle's fiction has an astounding variety of landscape, and especially in the rural countryside, whether French, Austrian or British, her stories seem to be comfortably at home. In general, although her European villagers receive a national or ethnic distinctiveness largely through commonplace details of language, custom and their attitudes toward their neighbors and enemies, the sense of a permanently rooted connection between them and the ageless life of the land (weather, topography, seasons, crops) is consistently and surely evoked. In fact, it seems to me that this aspect of her fiction—the unsentimental delineation of a solid, sometimes sullen momentum of traditional folk life—is the strongest achievement in Boyle's work. That twentieth-century technology has doomed what centuries labored to create—and this, with or without extraordinary political upheavals—provides a constant undercurrent of irony and pathos to the individual fate of Boyle's characters.

But what one misses in Boyle's fiction—and it may be her most salient deficiency as a writer—is a consistent recognizable *emotional* landscape, a steady personal viewing center which might impart a distinctive style or tone or perspective to her stories. Such a center we find superbly achieved in Porter's work through the agency of a single characteristic sensibility—one, in fact, which is the result of dogged struggle and fictional self-realization. With equal authority such a center is achieved in Eudora Welty's fiction through the saturated familiarity with the particular regional landscape that Welty has absorbed, transformed and lovingly recreated. In Boyle's work, however, the writer or the narrator/persona tends to take the role of impersonal reporter, and the stories, more frequently than not, become twisted into well-meaning but finally unpersuasive and melodramatic contortions.

A steady passionate concern for social justice and an equally unswerving compassion for the poignancies of human suffering are powerful and noble weapons in any artist's arsenal—and to these Kay Boyle can justly lay claim. Further, she has learned her craft and each story gives evidence of a concern for structure and an attempt to make language define with accuracy and resonate with feeling. And yet, too frequently, the passion and the compassion tend to become the predetermined goals of the stories. Without an emotional landscape in which the contrarieties of desire and revulsion can find resolution in the ambiguous responses of the human heart, the noblest of sentiments seem overly strident and mechanically forced. Thus, one ought to recognize the diligence, the persistent quality of caring and the integrity of a long lifetime of work as Boyle's distinguished achievement. And if she is finally a minor writer among her gifted contemporaries, she has never been self-serving or cheap. □

Ritualized Murder

MICHAEL MELTSNER

WAITING FOR IT. *By Christopher Davis. Harper & Row. 182 pp. $9.95.*

LIFE FOR DEATH: A True Story of Crime and Punishment. *By Michael Mewshaw. Doubleday & Company. 281 pp. $10.*

Troy Gregg was raised by his grandparents on a forty-seven-acre farm in the hill country near Asheville, North Carolina. Before he was born, his great grandfather cut his great grandmother's throat with a razor; he was never charged with the crime. Troy did not know his father. His mother, a shadowy figure in his life, died of cancer at the age of 43. His stepfather was good-natured until he got drunk, "then he went crazy . . . put his wife in the hospital a few times" and beat Troy and his two half-sisters. When Troy was 12,

Michael Meltsner, dean of Northeastern Law School, is the author of Cruel and Unusual: The Supreme Court and Capital Punishment *and* Short Takes, *a novel (both Random House).*

GRANDFATHER'S PASSAGE

I can hear your breath in the hold of the ship
face pressed in sleep against a woman's heavy blouse.
A logger's cap pulls tight across your eyes
shutting out light from the deck above.

You tell me this story many times before sleep
and in the dark your brothers dress you again
for one long trip from which you don't return.
Like hearing talk at your own funeral, you freeze

as aunts and uncles whisper: *in the new land*
he will not suffer anymore. But each night,
I return to the beginning with you, going to sleep
by the rise and fall of your chest. The ship's hold

keeps your breath so you must return again
to find it. Lodged in a damp, steel corner,
repeating its sound as if to charm you
back to the shore, back to the steep coast road,

back to the arms of family, giving you up
with a loaf of bread and three coins for luck
to a place where nothing is familiar
but the story of coming here.

Deborah Gimelson

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his uncle—an ex-cop—went on a bloody rampage at the family home: after wounding Troy's grandfather and killing his grandmother, the uncle shot and stabbed his three children; then he turned the gun on himself.

As a young man, Troy worked in gas stations and on road crews; operated a crane and drove trucks. He married and divorced, lasted in the Army three months before a medical discharge. Later, he let his hair grow, adopted a hippie look and drifted to a small town in Florida where he was regarded by residents as a steadying influence on several young people. Troy had no criminal record, though he was suspected of being implicated in petty thefts and local police hassled him. The police confiscated narcotics paraphernalia and a .25 caliber automatic pistol, but the gun was registered. Since possession was legal, the weapon was returned.

In 1973, when Troy was 25, he and a 16-year-old companion were picked up by two men while hitchhiking north on a Florida parkway. One of the two was carrying a thick wad of bills; both were drinking heavily. There is some evidence that one of the men wanted Troy to help him rob the other. The next day both were found lying sprawled across a concrete culvert near an interstate highway in Gwinnett County, Georgia. The money was gone. The car was traced and Troy arrested. He admitted firing shots but claimed self-defense. The jury chose not to believe him. Under a Georgia statute that requires jurors to weigh aggravating and mitigating circumstances before sentencing, Troy was condemned. In a 1976 case that bears his name, the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of both the statute and Troy's sentence.

In cases like this, the jury rests its decision to condemn on aspects of the offense deemed particularly culpable—though other juries have refused to sentence to death for worse. From afar, capital punishment appears capricious: for example, had Troy Gregg been tried just a few miles to the south in Atlanta, or if the dead men had been black instead of white, his chances of escaping a death sentence would have been many times greater; his jury seemed particularly upset by the fact that the victims were taking him to a destination that was not on their route; Troy's lawyer did not offer evidence of mitigation though there were character witnesses in the courtroom. Once on death row, the prisoner fights to maintain his sanity while appeals grind on. Days of idleness fuel a struggle between the fear and the denial of death. New people come into his life—lawyers, a female correspondent, a journalist; ties to family and friends fray. To fend off the impending horror of annihilation and the constriction of prison life, he withdraws inward, dedicates himself to managing the passage of time. Some lose hope entirely, give up and welcome the end. For every Troy Gregg battling to survive in an airless cell, there is a death-row inmate sinking into psychosis.

By now the genre is familiar. Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood* became a best-selling classic; more recently, Norman Mailer's *The Executioner's Song* also rose high on the lists; not long ago, *Rolling Stone* published the diary of a Florida death-row convict. With more than 600 men and women awaiting execution, more reports can be expected: poverty, as often as not in the rural South; a disjointed childhood marked by family violence, a youth by odd jobs. Though he has known the wrong side of the law, the condemned man is not usually a professional criminal. If he uses drugs, he is not a heavy dealer. Even if there is evidence of planning, the crime nevertheless seems haphazard, impulsive, situational.

A profound detachment helps make *The Executioner's Song* a powerful experience—even to a skeptical reader who wonders where Mailer stops, where the condemned Gary Gilmore begins and whether it matters. In *Waiting for It*, Christopher Davis has chosen to make himself part of Troy's story. The two reconstruct the past in a prison storeroom; after interviewing the murdered men's families, police and lawyers, and visiting places where Troy has lived and the scene of the crime, Davis offers his own interpretation of the murders, one that corroborates Troy's defense. Throughout, he is scrupulous in reporting the evolution of his own feelings toward the man he has come to know. He wrote this book because he believes the death penalty will not be eliminated until people understand that the state is "not killing an idea or a number but a man of flesh and blood"—though flesh and blood can make us recoil with disgust as much as forgive. But this is not a senti-

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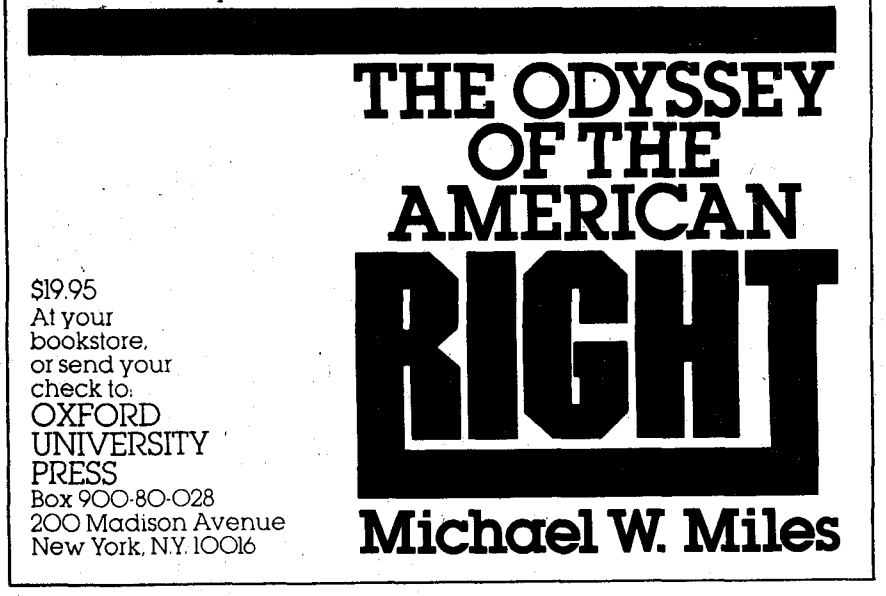

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mental abolitionist tract. Davis describes Troy, warts and all, but by placing himself in the landscape, he makes it easier for us to consider the moral universe in which these events take place. Where Mailer is the unseen photographer behind the telephoto lens reporting the inevitable, both Davis and Troy seem capable of change. It is a shame that few readers of *The Executioner's Song* will discover *Waiting for It*. The contrast is instructive. Davis is fallible, probing, sincere; Mailer omnipotent, icy, remote.

General attitudes toward the death penalty tell little. So long as execution is infrequent, passion is rare. Those who reject capital punishment, with few exceptions, display as little sustained energy as its supporters. The two sides are fighting over a symbol, one that commands a fitful allegiance. There are hundreds of men on death row, but given our astronomical rate of criminal homicide there could be many more. The states have been able to execute three men in the almost four years since the Burger Supreme Court approved jury death sentencing—as long as minimal procedural protections were provided for the accused. One was killed involuntarily; the other two (Gilmore and Jesse Bishop in Nevada) employed the state as a means of suicide. Thousands and thousands of (potentially) capital murderers have been apprehended during this period. If killing these killers is a good thing, how is it that we don't see more of it? If execution is a brutal, senseless sanction, inevitably random and racist, why is it so difficult to get more than a dozen active abolitionists together in the same place? Neither Mailer nor Davis says much about this ambivalence, but by engaging us in these lives they evoke the tangled feelings that produce mixtures of apathy and confusion in both personal attitude and public policy. Under present conditions, the death penalty is less criminal sanction than ritualized murder.

Davis has written Troy Gregg's biography out of a conviction that knowing a man makes it more difficult to kill him. Perhaps his careful, intelligent book will help to spare Troy, but as Davis realizes, that will not break the "iron circle of wrongdoing" where the state and the individuals of which it consists set out to kill for self-protection and end up preparing for human sacrifice. When Troy is killed, Davis says he will feel responsible; but with respect to the men who follow Troy in the electric chair, he will be "to an increasing degree corruptly indifferent." That which is corrupt in the state, he concludes, "shrewdly counts on it."

Very few chronicles of crime and punishment leave the reader with a high opinion of the work done by the lawyers, judges, police and psychologists who must deal with the aftermath of violence. Institutional roles twist people out of human shape and make them into stereotypical bureaucrats; they display what we ask of them—ritualistic behavior, jargon-ridden speech, attention to "evidence" rather than facts. The story told in Michael Mewshaw's *Life for Death* is no exception. One morning in January 1961, Mewshaw, then a Maryland high school senior, picked up the telephone and became the first outsider to learn that Wayne Dresbach, a 15-year-old befriended by Mewshaw's family, had murdered his adoptive parents. In short order Wayne was apprehended, convicted and sent away to an institution for "defective delinquents" for life. Despite some hints of brain damage and mental disorder and stronger evidence that he was a physically battered and emotionally brutalized child, the Maryland courts brushed aside an insanity defense, and failed to investigate, much less take account of, the forces that drove Wayne to pick up his father's rifle and start shooting. Mewshaw's excavations suggest that beneath a thin veneer of respectability and affluence, Harold and Shirley Dresbach lived a life out of de Sade. Not only did they freely strap and punch, coerce and humiliate Wayne and his brother, Lee—whose role in the murders remains unclear—but they made both children observers of their prodigious appetite for spouse swapping, group sex, pornographic photography and drunken brawling.

Dresbach was a father who forced his children to visit nudist camps and relished devising devilish punishments for minor infractions of his rules; when duck hunting he was not averse to shooting a swan. The point is not, of course, that he and his wife thereby deserved to die or that for murdering them Wayne should have been docked two weeks' allowance and then sent home, but that the warped childhood they imposed on their son has not until now been subject to public scrutiny. The

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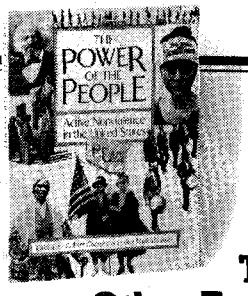

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author of five novels, Mewshaw tells what happened to Wayne with the dramatic power one would expect from a story that has been gestating for twenty years. Wayne is now out of prison. He apparently sees this book as a way to help him make sense of his life, which he now seems to have salvaged; his brother, Lee, declined to cooperate with the author.

In the 1960s, the Supreme Court attempted to improve the administration of criminal justice by a series of rulings designed to regulate the police and increase the bundle of rights available to those accused of crime. On the heels of these decisions, both Federal and state governments began to divert additional resources to train and support more professional police departments and court personnel. These reforms cannot be written off because they failed to make us happy about the way we deal with criminals. Inevitably, we deal here with cutting losses—there are no winners in the criminal justice system. But they did leave intact the basic assumption that we could learn what happened and what best to do from an adversary system that gives control over information to self-interested contestants. A whole barnful of sacred cows is now ready for the slaughter.

The material dredged up by authors like Mewshaw and Davis is telling us that we must break away from the notion that the adversary system we have is the only option open to us. The matter is put plainly in a recent book that has not received the attention it deserves: *Denial of Justice* (Free Press) by Lloyd Weinreb of the Harvard Law School. Weinreb begins by establishing that present methods of investigating and prosecuting crime are unresponsive to our needs. Rather than putting forward further suggestions for tinkering with the works—"a bit more law enforcement or a bit more respect for the defendant"—he recommends that "the investigative responsibility of the police, except insofar as it is an incidental aspect of their peacekeeping and emergency functions, be reassigned to an independent branch of the judiciary" and that "primary responsibility for investigating a crime, preparing an accusation and proving guilt be joined in a single agency." In short, Weinreb proposes an investigating magistracy unknown in this country and derived from continental criminal procedure. His "alternative model," the details of which cannot be presented here, is likely to be resisted and ridiculed, if not ignored. It is strong medicine—it upsets powerful habits of mind, economic interests, prerogatives of the legal profession and settled interpretations of the Constitution.

Nothing like what he proposes is likely to happen soon, or ever, but our capacity to live with a set of institutions that promote gamesmanship and manipulation, that unduly restrict information available to decision makers and allow partisan presentation of the evidence as well as verdicts and sentences that respond to the defendants' ability to pay, may not be infinite. Weinreb has opened a door. Books like *Life for Death* and *Waiting for It,* totally absorbed as they are in the cases at hand, may stimulate those frustrated with the criminal justice system to give a hearing to fundamental changes. They are vivid reminders that the "criminal law revolution" of the 1960s merely brought us to a level of basic fairness where we could see what remains to be done. □

Elegant Jujitsu

MARK KRAMER

GOING TO EXTREMES. *By Joe McGinnis. Alfred A. Knopf. 304 pp. $12.95.*

Joe McGinnis, whose political chronicle, *The Selling of the President,* established his credentials as a first-rate journalist, has now (after a novel and an autobiographical work) written a travel book. What makes it especially audacious is that it is about Alaska, and treads ground visited by two nonfiction masters, John McPhee and Edward Hoagland. *Going to Extremes* is fine reading. It is thick with whole people, exotic landscapes, the nervous and constant curiosity of an adventurer who knows that the essence of place is more likely found while chat-

Mark Kramer teaches writing at Smith College and is the author of several books, most recently Three Farms: Making Milk, Meat and Money from the American Soil *(Atlantic-Little Brown).*

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ting in barrooms than while viewing the wondrous works of man and nature.

McGinnis tours, by ferry, pickup, travel-all, station wagon, planes scheduled and chartered, darning his way about the vast state, and finally, on foot, pushes far into the northerly Brooks Range with a hiking party of conservationists. McGinnis has a sharp eye for the rough and beery self-servers, the opportunistic but misfit wanderers who have swelled Alaska's population since the discovery of oil. The vignettes that fill the first sixteen chapters form an exquisite *cinéma vérité* whose unmoderated but soon patent message tells of the destruction of nature and culture by exploitative invaders.

There's not a sentence of preaching in the book. Again and again, with an elegant journalistic jujitsu, McGinnis has his people do themselves in, announce their own poignance, crassness, lostness and, now and then, nobility. A brassy pot-paunched kitchen-fixture salesman's introductory comment to him is, "How come you're drinking that shit? Let me get you a decent drink." A Wrangell housewife grabs a quick lay on the ferry home from her once-a-year outing to Seattle, then is escorted, staggering drunk, into her husband's hands by her new lover's new friends. A scarred, trembling hooker draws a huge revolver in a travel agency where McGinnis is interviewing the burned-out, sleazy owner. At a drunken party, Olive the educated Eskimo has invited McGinnis to her village. Then, after a plane has abandoned him on the desolate main street of her town, she greets him with, "When are you going back?"—thus introducing him to the seething antiwhite hostility that apparently has gripped many native Alaskans since their most recent bout with opportunity. Beautiful vignettes, strongest when dealing with bar friends, less boldly drawn when describing company officials, rural entrepreneurs, former academics who have made new lives in snowbound cabins along Arctic Circle traplines.

Only one thing is missing from McGinnis's journey, and that is McGinnis. There's hardly a glimpse of the man who met all those interesting people and went to all those alien and exciting places. He never talks about himself. With two interesting exceptions, he never hints at why he's chosen his subject, why he's footloose, how he reacts to the sequences he relates, the people he meets. He is conspicuously absent.

Such near invisibility must have been a useful posture for him to assume in the field, when discovering how things really are. It even suits exposition of some complex and orderable subjects whose telling aspects don't require the author to discuss how he banished ignorance and learned what's what.

But this is a travel book. It is a wanderer's chronicle—a lovely and well-worn genre, and a difficult one. And one of its well-settled conventions seems to require the author's tasteful self-revelation, his offering of personal evidence (if the trip is to be thought worthwhile) that travel has indeed broadened him.

Which leads to the two moments of self-revelation. The first is a confession of pain felt atop a high mountain glacier onto which he has flown in a ski-plane. It's a triumphant backpacker's pain, pain evoked by "the inability to look in all directions at once." This is a striking passage, surprising because our unknown host tells what he feels, not what he sees—he is "consumed by immensity and splendor beyond anything I had ever imagined." He does so with a seemingly unconscious sweetness, for it

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is not done with particular artfulness, just an atypical blurt of astonishment.

The second moment occurs after days of hard hiking, fearful days punctuated by encounters with grizzlies. He has made a frightening solo ascent—again unconsciously. He "looked around, and only then realized that I had, quite by accident, ascended to the summit." Then come two days socked into a fog-fog-bound tent, comes the payoff of book and trip: a climb through an almost intestinal canal of rock into a mile-long grassy meadow, tranquil in the midst of arctic desolation. McGinnis experiences a mystical fullness before "this astonishing display which had seemed to give each of us a deep and sudden private flash of insight into the process of the creation of the earth." It's so private he restrains his temptation to share it with camping archeologists he encounters the next day. And perhaps he is still ambivalent about sharing it with readers, for the experience is invoked, rather than described. He leaves one convinced of the preciousness of pristine wilderness, but frustrated with the host's elusiveness. □

THINGS RUN DOWN

In the apartment with its sweet sharp stench
there is talk of death by stroke
and death by cancer
and death by heart failure.
One would have thought as a child
So many choices!—
But there are very few.

The old parochial school will close.
Sundays, there is a bi-lingual Mass
(English and Spanish) at the church.
The Plummer mansion was razed,
isn't that a shame?

In the apartment with its sweet sharp stench
things wear out: the body, for instance,
which she jokes about,
being lop-sided now.
The left ear a dull blazing blank.
Swollen legs. Swollen ankles.
But last January's operation turned out well,
the thing was benign.
And the therapy—
"It's wonderful the treatments they have
these days, you know, it didn't use to be
like this, your father, for instance . . .
and your Aunt Ruth. . . ."

Things run down. Things run *here.*
To this apartment, this room, this voice.
Your Uncle Floyd in Highland Park died of a cancer,
you know, and Adelaide Paxton, your piano teacher,
she went quickly, it was the same kind of cancer,
you know, did I write you?—as Gloria's mother.

Above the unused piano are two pink sunsets
dramatic with the silhouettes of trees:
wedding presents belonging to *her* parents.
She speaks of them with a girl's pleased laugh
as if embarrassed of their age.
But aren't they beautiful? Sunset, trees—
Some things never change.

When we rise to leave she seizes our hands, hard.
Her smiling face goes ashen with the need not to cry:
but we will not cry.
Yes, later we will. Sometime.
We are private people,
and anyway what is there to say?

Things run down,
so simply.

Joyce Carol Oates

FILMS

ROBERT HATCH

The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith
Used Cars
Those Lips, Those Eyes

The latest film from Australia, and I think the best of them to date, is *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith,* directed by Fred Schepisi from a novel by Thomas Keneally. I have remarked in earlier reviews that pictures from Australia have about them an air of stubborn innocence, but that does not apply here. *Jimmie Blacksmith* is the unflinching account of a whole society enduring the consequences of racial conflict. The studied cruelty of the whites is revolting; the violence that befalls them is horrible, but Schepisi understands that moral judgments must be made in context and not by hindsight. There is wickedness in his text, but there are no villains.

The situation in frontier Australia at the turn of the century took the shape that developed wherever Europeans moved into the lands and disrupted the cultures of tribal peoples. The natives were uprooted and debauched and the settlers, seeing the result but closing their minds to the cause, despised and exploited the "black bastards." Jimmie Blacksmith represents probably the most pitiable victim of this process. Half white, he has been taken into the home of a well-meaning missionary, who gives him a rudimentary education and a smattering of "polite" manners, reminding him constantly that because there is good blood in his black veins he may hope to escape his savage heritage.

Jimmie is dutiful, able, ambitious and full of hope. However, the farmers for whom he works are not enthusiastic about "missionary niggers" and, from their point of view, with reason. Give a

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young man some learning, estrange him from his roots, bring him close to the amenities of white status but never allow him to attain them, and you are asking for trouble. If the young man is bright, proud and passionate, so much the worse for everyone concerned.

That is the substance of the film, and it is one with which most Western peoples, certainly most Americans, are familiar. What gives *Jimmie Blacksmith* distinction, what makes it searing at the time of viewing and haunting thereafter, is its texture. Schepisi conveys the pain and terror of his story with a spirit of compassion that embraces everyone concerned. He appreciates both the dignity and poetry of the aboriginal world from which Jimmy never entirely withdraws and the optimistic excellence of the new white communities—their bread is crisp, their curtains are starched, their horses gleam in harness—toward which Jimmie yearns.

He yearns in vain, however. And when at last he despairs, all the drive he had exerted to attain that other world he now turns to destroying it. Jimmie Blacksmith has heard that England has declared war on the Boers in South Africa; he accordingly declares war on the English. It is short, doomed, useless and sickeningly bloody. Tommy Lewis, who plays the part, is an actor of force and grace. He makes you love Jimmie, fear him and grieve for what was done to him and what he did in turn. I should add that Schepisi and his cameraman, Ian Baker, have made a film that is physically very beautiful, and never more so than in its most terrible moments. It is perhaps obvious to juxtapose the serenity of nature with the follies of man, but the observation is true and made here with unstressed pity.

The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith has stirred a good deal of controversy in Australia; fears have been expressed that it will make the natives restless, and censorship has been suggested. The reaction is predictable and interesting principally as a sign that, though the story is said to have taken place almost a century ago, its underlying situation remains relevant. By coincidence, the picture is released here at a time when native groups in Australia are protesting bitterly, but apparently in vain, a project that would place oil rigs on one of their sacred sites. A September 1 dispatch to *The Times* of London says that the plans of Amex Petroleum, an American company, will go ahead despite the outcries from the historic occupants of the land.

I went to see *Used Cars* because of its title. Here at last, I thought, someone has had the wit to memorialize the great American showdown, that between the confident sucker eager to match his wits against the smiling grifter. The used car salesman is the lineal descendant of the nineteenth-century horse trader, and neither in his day has enjoyed a reputation for unusual probity. That, probably, is because a car of unknown mileage, like a horse of obscure parentage, is merchandise susceptible to endlessly ingenious fraud, and traffic in such goods attracts persons whose tongues are as quick as their scruples are flexible. Yet buyers ready to hand over their money after a quick look into a plug's mouth or a brisk kick at a jalopy's front tires have never been reluctant to step forward, which reflects the fact that Americans in general are convinced they weren't born yesterday. You can see the same illusion flourishing on busy street corners in New York, its honest citizens gathering in tight circles to match wits with the three-card monte dealers. In theory, then, *Used Cars* showed promise.

In reality, the film is a work of coarse exaggeration, an amalgam of execrable taste and offensive violence, ignoring any social comment, not to mention satire or humor, that might be inherent in the subject. Instead, it is another in the depressingly long parade of daffy demolition movies that have crashed across the screen in the past few years. It is addressed to a mentally unnourished understanding of sprightly entertainment and is couched, for the most part, in the numbing obscenities of mentally unnourished speech.

The picture was directed by Robert Zemeckis, leading parts being taken by Kurt Russell, Gerrit Graham, Frank McRae, Deborah Harmon and a small dog. Jack Warden plays two brothers, owners of rival used car lots. The nice one dies early in the proceedings to provide the grisly gimmick of the plot; the nasty one blunders on apoplectically to predictable self-destruction.

There is little to be said for or against *Those Lips, Those Eyes,* a state of equilibrium that vexes reviewers. It intends to please and in that no doubt largely succeeds. It lacks enterprise, but bittersweet tales of life backstage need not exert themselves to attract a sufficient audience of sentimentalists.

Frank Langella, playing the song-and-dance star of a summer stock company in the sweet long ago, displays a charm sufficiently meager to suggest, as intended, that he will never make it to Broadway. But he also plays his "real," offstage part at the same level, trusting his looks to do the job for him, and I suppose that was not intended. Music is no problem for this show because it is set some thirty years ago, when titles like *Those Lips, Those Eyes* were not camp, and draws its songs from the great period of American operetta.

Michael Pressman directed the film as though he were working on the assembly line of one of the old Hollywood studios. He insists that his cast look awake, if not persuasively alive. Good or bad, most films today have an identity; this one has none at all. □

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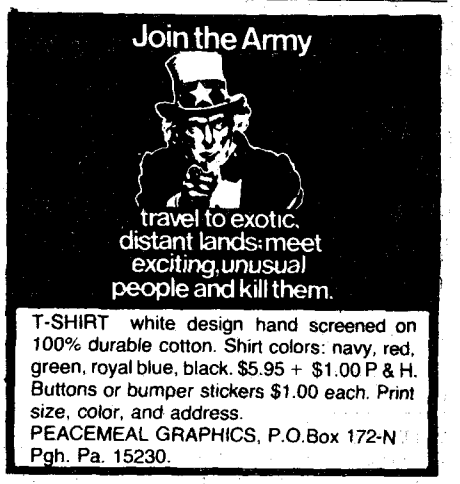
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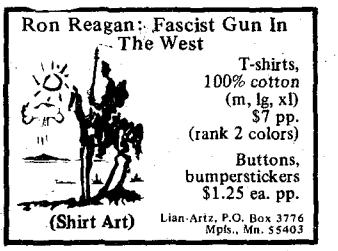
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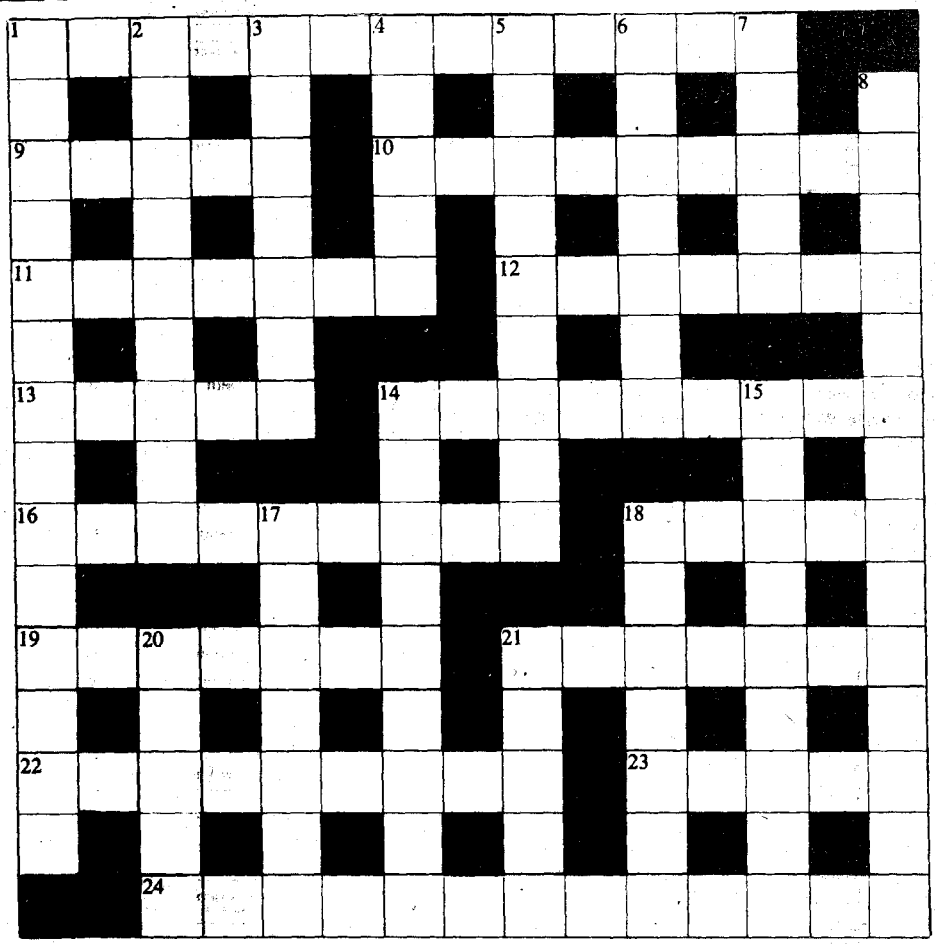
Crossword Puzzle No. 1836

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Would it represent a cross between cattle and hyenas? Or is one just a goat? (13)
9 Gore might be associated with him, though not all of his books are blood-and-thunder. (5)
10 Describing the Freshman who might get into stray fire. (5-4)
11 The charges are probably not very big here. (7)
12 Pertaining to the philosophy of Xenophanes, etc., a lie is fabricated. (7)
13 Vegetables sound as though they should be fixed in the kitchen. (5)
14 Typified by *Mourning Becomes Electra* and *Oresteia.* (9)
16 Becoming more strait, with the rain grown worse. (9)
18 You might only split them if you're very fussy. (5)
19 Nothing was left so by the Sprats. (7)
21 Jonathan from New England, according to the British. (7)
22 A happy beginning, with Louis being upset by the flower arrangement. (9)
23 Fiber implies no thorn on the thistle. (5)
24 If you're putting on other clothes, how could you be wearing these? (8,5)

DOWN

1 Certainly not Latin! (A quick tongue, as one might say.) (6,8)
2 Long John Silver is a euphemism for such, without a liver disorder. (9)
3 Aides, quite logically. (7)
4 Keen, if typed to be partially so slangily swell! (5)
5 A showing of the actors, or a weeding out of the worst ones? (9)
6 When motorists step on the gas, like many busy people. (2,3,2)
7 Rested on a limb, perhaps. (Did one propose to have done so in the old days?) (5)
8 They might bring you word that a suit is waiting for you. (7,7)
14 Do the eternal type have a girl sent out of them? (9)
15 This wire's prepared as a matter of course. (5,4)
17 Beyond which service is no good? (It's bound to be sketchy.) (7)
18 Going left, but on course? (One might find it catching.) (7)
20 Animal—the Spanish and the Africans know it . . . (5)
21 . . . and another animal getting on after a second time. (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1835

ACROSS: 1 Bedraggle; 6 Antic; 9 Avocado; 10 Caution; 11 and 13 Dimpled; 12 Ingres; 15 Handicap; 16 Red Sea; 20 Wheedles; 24 Intent; 25, 23 and 1 down Man overboard; 28 Loading; 29 Tornado; 30 Ideal; 31 Sandstone.
DOWN: 2 Doorman; 3 Avaricious; 4 Georgian; 5 Eschew; 7 Triples; 8 Canadians; 14 Debentures; 15 Hoi polloi; 17 Threaten; 19 Average; 21 Lumbago; 22, 6 down and 18 Snug as a bug in a rug; 26 Noose; 27 Dial.

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